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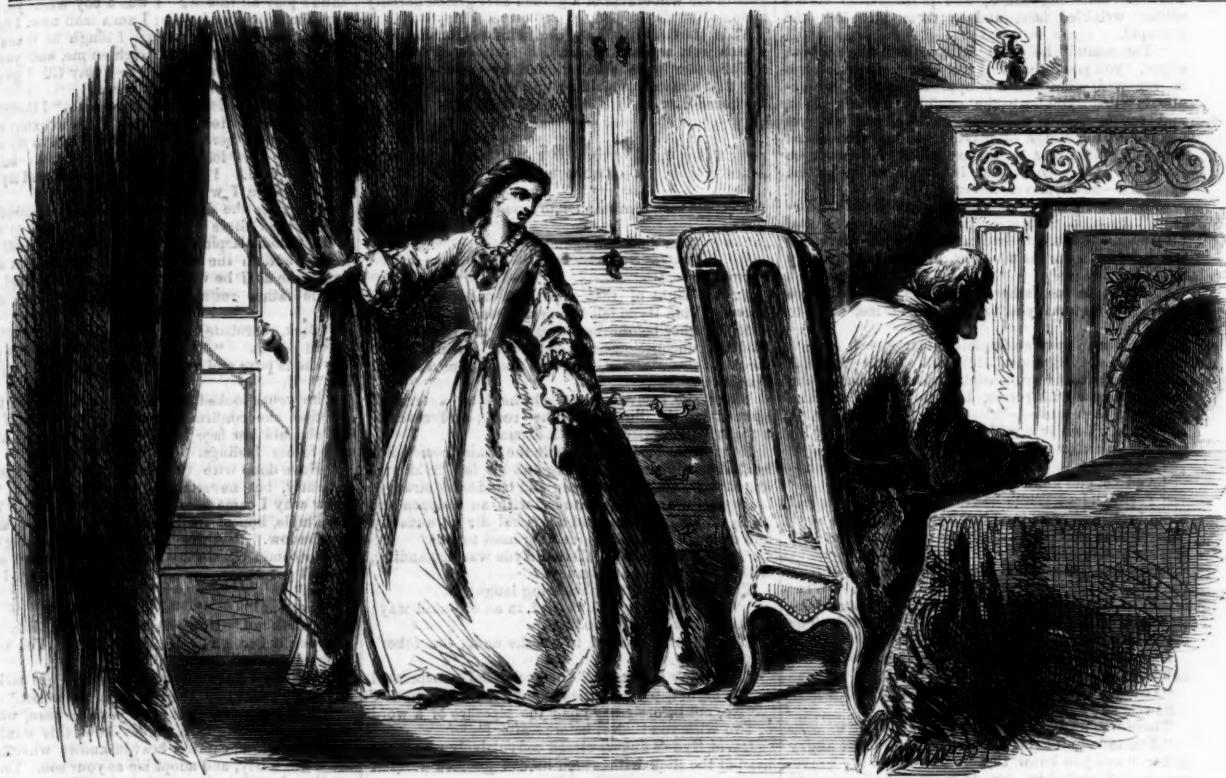
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[SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.]

THE GOLDEN MASK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Stranger's Secret," "Man and His Idol," "The Seventh Marriage," "The Warning Voice," &c., &c.

CHAPTER I.

SUNSET.

The glory in her eyes

Shone back that other sun in the low skies :

She shone more sunshine from her wavy hair.

And seemed to be all light.

Gloria.

The glory of a June sunset filled the long, irregular street of an English village.

Glowing as with flame, the sky burned over it, a gorgeous background for one tall spire, the ancient market-house with its steep roof, and the straggling houses, some of a remote date, quaint and picturesque, but the greater number modern and hideous.

Brighter and yet brighter grew the sky, till everything had a halo of light about it, and even indifferent objects grew pleasing. The window panes flamed like rubies. The thatch of cottage roofs had the hue of gold. A roadside pond flashed like the sapphire. Even the faces of the aged lit up with the rosy glow, as with a momentary return of the perished loveliness of their youth.

And when a fair young face came to a window with a western aspect and looked forth, how beautiful that was!

Beautiful it must have been at any time and under all aspects; but now as it appeared among the folds of crimson curtain—hastily snatched aside by a white hand—and the sunshine caught it, and irradiated the golden hair, and gave the dainty features an alabaster purity, the effect was irresistible.

Only for a moment or two was the sweet face visible.

Then the other white hand, not engaged about the curtain, was raised and held across the brow, shading the eyes beneath into a tender blue; then a sigh parted the clinging lips, and the curtain fell into its place.

The window with the western aspect, at which this vision of loveliness had appeared, was on the ground floor of a house, standing alone, at some distance from the upper end of the irregular street. It was the largest house thereabouts: it might also claim the distinction of being the ugliest.

A great, square, red-brick building, with half its windows boarded up, and a pretentious stone porch, added long after the original design, and inconsistent with it in style, is not calculated to charm the eye. More especially when, as in this instance, it is dropping to pieces with dilapidations, and is half-smothered in a choked-up garden, now become a wilderness.

Ugly, dismal, and forlorn, indeed, was the aspect of this the Great House of the village, taking refuge in its pride and ugliness behind a tangled unpruned hedge that had become a wall, hiding it from the road, but rendering visible the tops of some dozen ghostly poplars that stood about the house like sentinels, and moaned and creaked and shivered, alike under the breezes of June and the howling winds of December.

The room with the western outlook was, with the exception of sleeping apartments, the only habitable one in the house. A spacious but dull room, with darkened ceiling and a heavy flock paper, once crimson, but grown black with age. The glorious sunlight, finding its way in even through the drawn window curtain, and giving the room a lurid aspect, found little to brighten up and reflect itself in. A huge bureau of dead mahogany, a dining-table that would have accommodated a dozen, covered with a frayed Turkish cloth, several old portraits, black and seamed, in deep frames, and a wine-cooler like a sarcophagus, and as full of dust, constituted the principal features of the apartment.

An arm chair of ponderous dimensions, with a high back, covered with Russian leather, and drawn up before the fireplace as in the depths of winter, ought to be added to the description.

When the crimson window curtain fell from the white hand that had drawn it aside for an instant or so, a deep, querulous voice sounded in the room.

"What is it, Vida?" it said.

The voice was that of an old man, and it came from behind the great chair.

"Nothing, father," replied the fair being, whose exquisite form was outlined in rosy light as she turned from the window.

"You are restless," said the voice, reproachfully.

"Indeed, no; I—"

"Something has happened."

"Only the sunset. See, how beautiful it is!" She retraced her steps, and once more lifting the heavy curtain, let a flood of light into the room.

"Look, father, only look! How beautiful it is!"

But there was no responsive enthusiasm in the heart of the man by the fireside. He did not stir. Only there came a bitter tone into his voice as he said: "Let be, Vida, let be. What have I to do with beautiful things, or they with me? Beauty and youth go together. They're sworn friends, and when I turned my back on one, I turned my back on both. Beauty—I hate it, as I hate whatever reminds me that I am old, and hideous, and miserable! The light tortures me: shut it out."

With a little sigh she obeyed him, as she always did—this gentle, loving, patient child—making his will the law of her life, and humouring his caprices without a murmur.

As soon as the gloom of the apartment was restored—and it was all the more gloomy now, as the splendour of the evening began to depart—the old man reverted to the subject he had first broached.

"Tis in vain that you try to deceive me. The woman, Mildred, was here yesterday?" he said, half questioning and half in a reproachful tone.

"Yes; I am employing her," was the meek answer.

"And yet you know who employed her also, and to what purpose," said the first speaker.

The daughter trembled.

"He did it," cried the old man, bitterly. "He bewitched the woman with his stolen money and libertine ways, and made her fetch and carry, and scheme, and play the go-between to serve his ends. But we'll have no more on't. Mark that, no more on't, I say."

"I have heard no word from Ambrose since he left us," said Vida, plaintively.

"Heard! I should hope not," was the bitter answer. "I have, though!"

"You, father?"

"Yes—I" was the answer. "He is in England again."

The rosy glow that overspread face and neck at these words owed nothing to the paling sunset.

"Ah! It is true, then?"

"True!"

"I mean—"

Suddenly the chair revolved, jerked round by nervous clutching hands, and presented to view a white, wrinkled face, and a form stooping and crepid.

"You mean!" he cried, with a quick paroxysm of anger, "you mean that this forbidden correspondence is renewed—that you are apprised of his whereabouts—that you are the confidant of his plans, and schemes, and villainies—that he has not yet abandoned the design of making you his victim, and that you still nurse a dream which will never be realized. Never, so long as I have breath to protest against it—never, never, never!"

With an action full of womanly grace and tenderness, Vida, as her father—using the feminine form of his own name, David—had called her, leaned forward, put her hands on his shoulder, and so sank slowly to his knee.

"Be just to me, father!" she cried, in a plaintive tone. "I entreat you to be just to me, and—to him!"

The old man gave an impatient start.

"I have obeyed you in all!" the kneeling girl went on. "Since that terrible night when you drove him from the house with curses, I have neither met him nor heard from him—"

"Nor supplied him with the means of feeding his shameless profligacy?"

"No."

"And yet you know that he is returned?"

"Yes. Mildred White heard by chance that he had come back, and was in London, in desperate need, ill, and poor, and miserable, and she could not help coming to tell me of it."

"She had better have kept her tongue quiet!" the old man said, with increased exasperation. "What is it to us that he is here? What if he starves in the streets, or dies in a gutter? The reprobate! The thankless, ungrateful, wicked reprobate!"

Instinctively Vida covered her ears with her hands.

"I cannot bear these words!" she exclaimed.

"Because you still love him?"

There was no answer.

"You talk to me of obedience!" cried the angry father, "and you know that if I were in my grave, you would seek him out to-morrow. You would throw yourself away on him as surely as he would throw your fortune, if he could lay hands on it, into the sea. You are infatuated! You are bewitched!"

To this outburst Vida answered weakly:

"Oh, father, you loved him once!"

"To my sorrow—yes!"

"You adopted him! You made him your own son, and made it the wish of your heart that I should love him as a brother!"

"Well, well!"

"I did. There was no need to try. Love for him came into my heart like the sunshine. I doated on him—as you did."

"Doat! Yes, I doated! I loved the pretty, innocent boy as if he had been my own. But what matters? All this is past. Enough that I loved him while he was worthy of my love!"

"And I—forgive me, father—I grew to love him too well to think whether he was worthy or unworthy. When all hearts were open to him he was dear to me; but how dear I never knew until all turned their backs on him, and frowned him down, and drove him from his home. It had been your wish that I should love him as brother; it was my misfortune that I had grown to love him as a brother was never yet loved."

"Enough! enough!" cried the old man, wheeling his chair back towards the empty grate, before which he took up his position in summer as in winter. "This is a thing of the past. I have wiped him out of my memory. I have forbidden his name to be uttered in my presence. I have disclaimed him, washed my hands of him, and to me he is dead and buried. To you also, if you are a daughter of mine. Go, go; I despise myself that this ingrate should have had the power to ruffle my peace of mind as this bare mention of him has done."

With this angry outburst, the old man relapsed into silence.

Vida retired to the window, and took a seat there, with downcast face, so in shadow that the tears sparkling on her long silken eyelashes could not be

seen, and remained there with placidly-crossed hands.

The sun sank, the flaming splendour died out of the sky, the room grew darker and darker as the twilight deepened, and the evening closed in, and the intense silence which reigned in it was broken only by an occasional sound that escaped the lips of David Hyde—a sound between sigh and sob—and the rustle of Vida's dress, as she slightly changed her position from side to side.

It had grown quite dark, when the whole house was startled from its tomb-like repose by the sharp, abrupt clang of a bell, followed by the crashing of the iron-gate of the wilderness of a garden as it grated harshly open.

Vida started up, drew the window-curtain back with a jerk, and looked out.

The stars were shining, and by their light she saw that a man was striding up the flagstone-path to the house-door.

CHAPTER II. COMING HOME.

Better thou
Hadst not been born than not to have pleased me better.

King Lear.

I fear the sultry lightning of his eye:
His rage is stirred, and he is dangerous.

Mrs. Tragedy.

At the sight of that apparition under the starlit heavens, Vida Hyde felt her heart cease to beat, and a cloud gather before her eyes. A moment of bewildered unconsciousness succeeded, during which the room swam round, and the floor seemed to sink beneath her feet.

When she recovered, a light held by a terrified servant faintly illuminated the room, and revealed a sight which filled her with dismay.

Her father stood erect beside the chair from which he had risen, his eyes flaming and his face livid with anger. Before him a young and handsome stranger lounged in an easy attitude, with an independent smile on his bold face, and a general air of audacity and defiance pervading him from head to foot.

"Who are you, sir?" David Hyde was demanding, with a futile effort at calmness.

The other burst into a sneering laugh.

"Won't do, father," he replied, in an off-hand way; "clever, but it won't do."

The old man seemed to writhes under the other's airy audacity.

"Leave my house, sir!" he exclaimed, exasperated to the highest point. "Leave my house before—" "No, not before I have had the pleasure of a word or two with you! Not before—after!"

David Hyde's fingers closed convulsively round the head of the stick with which he had assisted himself to rise.

The stranger noticed the action, and the smile went from his lips.

"No, no," he said, pointing to the stick, "you'd better not; you struck me with that once—one blow—you remember it! and I don't think much good came of it, either to you or to me."

The lips of the man addressed worked with anger, but he dared not speak.

"That blow," the other went on, "made me what I am. Unjustly dealt, borne as meekly as the blood-horse receives the whip, it drove me from this house, drove me to maddening dissipation, drove me to run away to sea, drove me to malice, desertion, and to the desperation of poverty. Heaven help me! what did it not drive me to!"

"The false, Ambrose Copley!" shouted the enraged man. "Your own vices made you what you are."

"As you will," the other answered, bitterly. "I am not offended. I have long fallen beyond the mark when it pains a man to be told he speaks falsely. Time was when I should have felt it like the cut of a whip. But I've outlived all that. I'm beyond the pleasure or the pain a word can give. Thanks to you, always and ever thanks to you."

"Scoundrel!" hissed the other, stamping his feet in the impotence of rage.

Ambrose Copley flicked the end of a rank cigar, which he had been smoking, into the empty grate, and then answered:

"Is it pleasant to you to use these epithets?" he asked. "Do they relieve your mind or give you any satisfaction?"

"Yes!"

"Then don't spare them. I have gone through so much language in my time that I am language-proof. I am, indeed. Only as I have business with you, and it is late, hadn't you better dismiss Hannah, and let us begin?"

The servant Hannah, a gaunt woman of sixty, all bone, made a movement as if to go.

But her master fiercely bade her stay.

"I have nothing to say to this man," he exclaimed. "I order him to quit my house, and that instantly!"

"And he refuses to obey that order," said the renegade, coolly dropping into a chair.

"What! You defy me?"

"Here at my own hearth?"

"Exactly. I have no scruples."

"Take care. If you oblige me to use force to expel you, the consequences be on your own head."

The younger man only snapped his fingers.

"Talk of putting me out!" he said, contemptuously.

"You might as well talk of calling me out. What's play all this is?"

"I was a boy when you drove me from your door before; I am a man now. I thought it a terrible calamity then; I laugh at it as a joke now. No, no, you won't frighten me, and you can't hurt me. Here I am, and here I stay till I go of my own accord, and on my own terms."

"Terrible!" shrieked the elder man. "I thought so. You show your teeth at last. It is to extort money that you come here, as I expected; 'tis to my money that you have looked from first to last; but you come in vain. I will beggar myself and my child yonder before I will enrich you."

Following the direction of the outstretched arm that pointed these words, Ambrose turned to where Vida stood clasping a chair to save herself from falling, and in the fulness of his surprise at seeing her made as if he would rise and rush forward.

The father restrained him with a clutch of the arm.

"Back, reprobate! Back, miserable ingrate!" cried David Hyde. "Your presence pollutes this place, but she is pure and good, and you shall not approach her."

The youth looked appealingly toward Vida to see whether she confirmed her father's opinion of him, but she hid her face in her hands, and gave him no clue to her feelings.

"Have done with this folly, father," he cried, impatiently, but nevertheless with a half-sigh. "You know why I came here. I came for money. That's the simple, honest truth. Misfortune follows me like my shadow. Nothing I do succeeds; nothing that I try for comes within my reach. I must live, and as I can't get the means of doing so elsewhere, I come to you."

"Insolent!"

"I think not. However, just as you like. Only who ought I to go to if not to you? You are my adopted parent."

"No, no; I have cast you off. You are no longer any more to me than the beggar in the street."

"Stop a minute," cried the younger man, with the utmost coolness, "let us see how this stands. It was your whim, caprice, heaven knows what, to take me when a boy, and adopt me as your son. You gave me the education of a gentleman. You reared me in expensive habits, accustomed me to luxuries, and led me to believe that I was destined to share with your daughter in the inheritance of your hoarded wealth."

"I promised nothing," said the old man, petulantly.

"Not directly. Not in words; but since you reared me as a gentleman, what inference could I draw but that you intended to give me the position of one?"

"And if I did? And if I did not? All that is forfeited."

"No!"

"I picked you up, and I had a right to drop you."

"Not so! Such ties are not made and broken by caprice. I had no claim on you till you gave me a

It was of your own free will and pleasure that you raised me to the position of your own son; but having done so—having taken the one fatal step—you incurred an obligation from which nothing can or shall release you. You sought me, I did not seek you; it was your act, not mine; you made me your protégé, I decline to become your victim."

The lips of David Hyde quivered as he replied:

"Fine words! Fine words! What if I warn a snake in my bosom and the reptile stings me? Must I still cherish it? May I not cast it out at my door?"

"Possibly," replied the younger man, with a sneer. "I don't know what may be the etiquette as to snakes. Besides, we had better not get into poetry. I am not good at it, and this is a simple question of fact. I deny your right to throw me off and discard me."

"And I answer that your conduct justified my harshest measures. I did rear you as a gentleman, and how did you profit by it? In place of the man I would have made you, I found the graceless roysterer, the besotted vagabond."

The face of Ambrose Copley flushed crimson.

"Since we are to bandy words," he retorted, fiercely, "I must speak. You have a burning sense of wrong—so have I. You call me ungrateful and believe me vicious. Where is my ingratitude and what the proof of my vice? You took me a boy in humble life, but full of all the pluck, the daring, and the generous im-

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gates that won your heart. You sent me—wild and untaught as a young colt—to a school that was like a prison. I profited little, and why? Because their whole aim and end was to break my spirit—my stubborn spirit, they called it—and it would not be broken. I was a king among the boys—stronger and more agile and dexterous than any one of my pale-faced companions, I could throw the ball yards beyond the biggest of them, and leap the bar at a height that made them shudder. But I couldn't learn. It wasn't in me—I hadn't the brain for it; and while the lads gloried in me, the masters, one and all, led me a dog's life."

"Did a sob escape the lips of the listening Vida, as she still hid her face behind her hands?

Ambrose thought so, and went quickly on:

"I escaped from it at last. I came home. I entered the house stronger, more high-spirited, more buoyant, daring, and restless under control than ever. I felt like a prisoner escaped from gaol, and what did I find? Only that I had exchanged one prison for another, and a worse. I was expected to conform to the routine of a life that was intolerable to me—a life, which in its dull, regular plodding round drove me to the verge of distraction. A fiery-spirited boy of seventeen was expected to accept the life of a man of seventy, and to be thankful for it. Innocent amusement was called frivolity; fun was christened sin; the boisterousness of the boy's animal spirits was punished as ingrained wickedness. To be dull was to be good; but the highest virtue was an aptitude for and an assiduity in money-making. 'Fshaw! what cares a boy for money?' Avarice is the vice of age, and it was my nature to be free and generous as the wind. Was it strange, then, that I should feel the collar gall and be intolerable? For Vida's sake I bore with it. For her sake I forced down my strong spirits and boyish inclinations. But I could only do it for a time. Then the current grew too strong for me; it overcame all restraint, it carried me away with it. I found the means to gain stolen hours of liberty, fell in with companions of my own age and temperament, grew more and more reckless, till all was discovered, and I found myself denounced and driven forth as a monster of ingratitude and iniquity."

"And rightly so," interposed the angry man, who had listened with growing impatience.

"Not so," replied the excited youth. "The instincts of my nature were as innocent as they were generous. I had no vice in me, only spirit. Guided by a wise and kindly hand, I should have grown up a member of which society might have been good; but warped, coerced, tortured into a course foreign to me, and held under a control as merciless as it was vicious, there was no chance for me but that that should happen which did happen—over-restraint resulted in violent reaction." You would have your son a miser and a saint—you've made him a spendthrift and a libertine."

"Whatever I made him or he made himself," replied the exasperated old man, "I've done with him."

"You think so?"

"I know it. You will leave my house, and enter it again at your peril."

"Before I go, I must have money. I want it desperately, and I must and will have it," said Ambrose, firmly.

"Not from me," was the equally firm response.

"Why, to whom but you should I come? You minded me, and you must bear the consequences of our own act."

"Never!" shrieked David Hyde, growing apoplectic with fury. "I have but one answer to your insolence, to your shameless audacity—Go! I order you to quit my presence."

"And I refuse to obey."

"I will have you thrust from my house with violence."

"And I will return with half the village—all kinds, all boon companions of the old, the old time—to force an entrance again. I have come home—home! do you understand?—and I have a mind to stay here?"

"Then, by all that's sacred!" shouted the exasperated and overwrought David Hyde. "I will defeat your purpose! Here you shall not remain. Here—"

His voice failed, and his hands shook as with pain.

"Here—" he faintly articulated again; then dropped into the chair from which he had first risen.

Vida, the terrified Vida, rushed forward with a suppressed scream of horror, and threw her arms about her father's neck.

One glance at his face sufficed; then she turned her head toward Ambrose Copley, who had risen, and who beheld, with a transport of admiration, the flushed face and beautiful features presented to his gaze.

"Leave us, Ambrose! For my father's sake, pray go!"

He heard her as a man whose charmed ears drink in delicious music, the purport of which he does not know.

And so listening, he stood immovable.

"Ah! cruel!" cried the unhappy girl, in a reproachful tone. "Once my tears would have moved you."

"But, Vida—"

"Ah! no words—no words; but go. For my sake, Ambrose—mine—mine!"

"For your sake, be it?" he responded, in a marked tone. "I will quit this house, but not for long. I have sworn that he who has made me what I am, shall support me as I am. Good-by, Vida, but not for long. Be sure that it is not for long."

He caught up the hat which had fallen at his feet: and darting an angry glance at the old man crouching in his chair, disappeared from the room.

The gaunt Hannah, who had been a placid witness of this scene, set the candlestick she held upon a table and went also.

Sixty and daughter were left alone once more in the gloomy chamber—the father, staring with fixed eyes at the door by which the unwelcome visitor had departed, and Vida bending over him, tearful and alarmed. The effect of the scene through which he had just passed on David Hyde was, indeed, alarming. He seemed for a time on the verge of apoplexy. But after awhile the symptoms changed for the better, and in answer to his child's expression of sympathy, he was able to assure her that the danger was past.

An hour of calm succeeded, but it was a constrained and unnatural calm so far as David Hyde was concerned. He was during that time forming a plan and coming to a decision, and Vida was startled out of the tearful melancholy in which she could not refrain from indulging, by an abrupt announcement of the result.

"I must go to Silverthorpe to-night, Vida," he said, standing up.

"Father!" she ejaculated, in astonishment.

"I must: 'tis imperative."

"But to-morrow—will not that do?"

"No."

"Tis so late, and the road so lonely. Try, try if to-morrow will not do?"

"I tell you it will not. Why, with this ruffian prowling about with heaven knows what intent, I may not be alive to-morrow."

"Oh, father, you do not think Ambrose capable—"

"Capable!" he interposed, with angry bitterness. "I think that he would not stop short at anything: he would rob me—murder me, if it came to that. Order Abner to have the old nag out in ten minutes. I will ride over."

Knowing the futility of opposing her father's wishes, the fair Vida quitted the apartment to give the order and make arrangements for his departure. As she did so, she saw him go to the old bureau, from a drawer in which he took a paper and put it into an inner pocket in the breast of his coat.

CHAPTER III. THE CRY IN THE NIGHT.

I heard
The shrill-edged shriek divide the shuddering night.
Villany somewhere! Whose?

The stars of midnight shone over the quaint little town of Silverthorpe, and were reflected in the turbid little river that flowed through its midst.

It was so quiet that the river's flowing was audible, and the mechanical steps of the policemen as they went their rounds startled light sleepers out of their dreams. In street after street not a light at a window was to be seen: the inmates of almost every house had retired to rest, and even the houseless had slunk into holes and corners and disappeared from sight.

A strong light which burned in the window of one house would therefore have attracted marked attention but for the fact that this house was situated in a lane, in the oldest part of the town, so narrow that the windows in the upper storeys, on the opposite sides, almost met, and little could be seen of them from below.

The house in question was both old and old-fashioned; it had been a mansion of some importance in by-gone times, but was now occupied, like those adjoining it, by persons of limited means, who were compelled to sacrifice comfort to economy.

This was sufficiently apparent from the appearance of the room in which the light burned.

It was a drawing-room dingy in its appointments, and with unmistakable signs of the hard struggle of poverty with respectability in everything that met the eye. The carpet was worn to its threads, much

of the furniture was clumsy and old-fashioned, and it had been rendered barely sufficient by the addition of several new articles, all of a cheap and common description.

Two persons occupied this room.

At a table on which stood a shaded lamp, sat a man in the prime of life, with a handsome, aristocratic face, and the unmistakable air and manner of a born gentleman. The face was too pallid for perfect health—it was moreover worn and haggard—the black hair curling over a superb forehead, was in disorder, and he was dressed with the utmost carelessness. His occupation was writing, and he had already covered many sheets of large blue-tinted paper, which were scattered in disorder on the floor about him.

As he wrote, the movements of his pen were occasionally watched by the drowsy eyes of a woman, who, lying back in a chintz-covered easy-chair, at no great distance from the table, was engaged in a hard struggle not to fall asleep over a half-netted silk purse, which, with the needles, lay in her lap.

She was a pretty woman—a very pretty woman—but like her companion, had a suffering, wasted look. Her shining brown hair, put smoothly back so as to reveal the ears, gave effect to a perfectly oval face, with delicate features, but with a mouth and chin indicating a determination and strength of will which at the first glance would hardly have been suspected.

There are some women whose dress seems to form part of their character, and it was so in this instance. A black silk skirt and a black velvet jacket are ordinary articles of female attire; but the combination was in this instance singularly elegant, and there was a grace about the jacket, with its bugle trimming shining in the light, which seemed to identify it with the style of the wearer's beauty, and to produce the feeling that she could not be half so beautiful in anything else. A slight, black-lace shawl thrown over the back of the head, and held together by the little snow-white hand, from which the half-netted purse had dropped, completed the charm.

After a long silence, during which the pen had worked on incessantly, and the watching eyes had fairly closed, the writer threw down his pen and leaned back in his chair, utterly exhausted.

"No more to-night," he exclaimed, "not another line. Why, Hilda! Fairly tired, my pet?"

"I—I was asleep, Fabian!" cried the lady, rubbing her eyelids and looking about her incredulously.

"Ay, and no wonder," was the answer. "It's weary, weary work. It must be done. But oh! how I hate it. How I detest it; the monotony of it will drive me mad!"

He started up, and pushing the table from him, began to pace the room.

"Dear, dear Fabian!" cried the lady, rising also, and speaking in a deeply commiserating tone.

"Hang it! no, don't pity me," returned the wearied man; "I don't know what I'm saying. I'm a fool to quarrel with my bread. Others work as hard, harder than I do, and make no trouble of it; but I—I wasn't born to this life. I had no training for it. It galls me—it degrades me!"

"Because you are too clever for it—oh! so much too clever for it!" cried the wife, for such was the relation in which she stood to the speaker.

"Tisn't that," he replied, in a vexed tone, pleased with the flattering suggestion, nevertheless; "but I am a gentleman born and bred, and how can I take kindly to this dog's work? But there, there, I'll complain no further. It pains you and makes you unhappy. I'm a brute to let a word of this pass my lips, and yet if I didn't, I do truly believe that I should go mad. I do so hate work, and poverty, and debt, and all the horrors we have around us. I do so hate and detest everything, except my darling, always except you."

She had gone to his side, and he put his arm round her waist as he spoke, and thus while he pressed her to his heart, they paced the room together.

"It will be only for a time, darling," said the fond wife; "your talent must make way."

"Talent!" he cried, with scorn. "What chance has talent unaided in this country? It is money, connection, interest, that raise men to a position. For the want of a few paltry hundreds, I, who might have led the baras a barrister, am forced to toil like a copying-clerk. I, with my ambition, with an insatiable thirst for wealth and splendour born in me and forming part of my very being!"

He raised his head as he spoke, with a proud, defiant action, and his eyes blazed with the intensity of the momentary feeling.

The gentle woman at his side turned away her face and sighed.

The action, simple as it was, sent a pang to his heart.

"I make you unhappy, Hilda," he said, in a tone of self-reproach.

"No, oh, no! It is not that; but—but—Oh!"

Fabian! it is through me that you work so hard and are so poor."

The manly arm tightened with a re-assuring clasp round her waist.

"I am content," he said. "I will never grumble more."

"You are all goodness," replied the wife; "but I can never cease to torment myself with reproaches. Heaven knows I love you and am happy; but I ought never to have been your wife. How could I ever hope to fill the place of the great court beauty who should have borne your name? I knew how you loved her. I knew how terrible the blow was when she threw your poverty in your teeth as the pretext for casting you off. I saw, too, or thought I saw, that the sympathy of a loving heart could alone save you in that dark hour. But I was wrong. I should have given you all my love, but left you free. I should have consoled and tended you, and been content. My duty was self-sacrifice, not the gratification of my own heart. Oh! forgive, forgive me, Fabian; I cannot forgive myself!"

Fabian listened with suppressed anguish.

It was not the first time by many that he had heard such words from the lips of his wife, or had felt called on to console her with re-assuring terms. But now, as always on such occasions, his heart failed him.

The chance allusion to the woman who might have been his wife—the beautiful aristocrat who had intoxicated his boyish heart, and still held him under the spell of her enchantment—rendered him dumb.

"I owe all my happiness to you, darling," he contrived to whisper; "and as for Lady Edith, why should I think of her with any but a feeling of bitter resentment? I was never more to her than a toy. She played with my love till she wearied of it, and then threw me aside without a pang. Should I love her, or should I hate her?"

"You should forgive her, Fabian; but let us mention her name no more. She was unworthy of you."

He did not answer.

"A haughty woman, with a wicked heart—a cruel, wicked heart."

Fabian's cheek crimsoned.

"Perhaps we wrong her," he said, petulantly. "She moves in a high circle, in which they do not regard these matters quite from our point of view. And her great beauty gave her some warrant for caprice. Besides, she was so flattered and adored that it is no wonder if her brain grew dizzy with the homage she received.

"Her brain—yes. But her heart?"

"Might have been true as steel. Impossible to say of one moving in her high sphere. The daughters of great families are little more than slaves to routine and family interests. They dare not act as they would. Considerations of family and position clog and hamper them at every turn. They are like Princesses of the Blood Royal, and what have they to do with hearts?"

The wife gazed into her husband's eyes with dismay.

"Why, Fabian, you never spoke like this before!" she said.

"Perhaps not; but—"

"You didn't speak or think like it that terrible night when I found you stretched on the floor, moaning and writhing in your agony. You had no pity then. You made no excuses for the blow by which she had crushed you, but raved and railed at her as a cruel, cruel fiend, a sinner, who had lured you on to your destruction, a heartless, wicked woman. Those were your thoughts then."

"Because my passion blinded my reason."

The wife shook her head incredulously.

"I have had time to think since then," he went on, "and the more I have thought, the more learned I have grown. How dared I, the son of a ruined family, to measure her conduct by my low standard? I am grown wiser now. I see rank and wealth in a new light. It is the privilege of the great to despise the laws that govern meaner creatures. They have their own code of right and wrong. They act according to the necessity of their position, not ours. Happy, happy beings, I look up to them with boundless admiration! Oh, to be rich! Oh, to be great, powerful, independent of the poor, sordid, carping, miserable world! Will it ever be my lot? Shall I ever move in the charmed circle that blinds me with its splendour?"

His eyes glowed, his face was radiant, he threw up his arms in the fervour of this apostrophe, and suffered the trembling woman who listened to shrink from his side unnoticed.

"Fabian, you frighten me," she cried.

He did not hear her.

"I will rise at any cost," he shouted. "I care not how desperate the expedient. I will, I must do it."

Again the wife interposed.

"Fabian, Fabian!" she cried, "you have never talked like this before. What has happened to put these thoughts into your head? If we have been poor, we have been happy."

"Happy!" he retorted bitterly, "oh, yes, happy enough, so far. If there's happiness in two hungry mortals starving one against the other, we've been happy. If to die in a hole, with the satisfaction of dying together, is happiness, we're likely to have enough of it. But no! From to-night my plans change. I will gratify my ambition, in spite of fate!"

He stopped abruptly.

With the fierce words that escaped his lips there mingled another sound, which caused husband and wife to start and to gaze at each other with looks of terror and consternation.

A shrill, long-protracted shriek rang through the silent night. Then the words were distinctly audible:

"Murder! Help!"

They rose from the street below.

The listeners went to the window instinctively, and throwing it open, looked out. The intensity of the darkness rendered it impossible for them to observe what was passing; but they heard a retreating footstep, and then a piteous groan.

"Some one is in pain," cried the sympathizing woman.

"I will go down," replied Fabian.

And igniting a taper by the lamp on the table, he quitted the room.

For some seconds the woman listened. She heard a chain rattle and a bolt undrawn. Next the creaking of a door caught her ear.

Then a sudden impulse induced her to quit her listening position.

"Fabian has never been as he has been to-night," she murmured. "What has caused it? What should do it, but the influence of that cruel woman reawakening in his heart? But how? Let me think, let me think. This morning I surprised him as he was thrusting something hastily into his desk. He blushed and looked confused. She cannot surely have written to him? She would not dare to do so? And yet, what is there she would not dare?"

Impelled by an irresistible impulse, she approached the desk upon the table and opened it.

The lid had been hastily shut down—so hastily that there had not been time to close the secret drawer of the desk. That therefore remained open and exposed to the wife's view a packet of letters and a portrait of a beautiful, but haughty and scornful woman.

Shocked at the discovery, the injured wife seized the portrait and would have thrust it into her bosom; but in the very act her strength failed her, and she sank back into the chair before the desk, completely overcome.

She did not hear the sound of tottering footsteps in the room below.

Nor the voice of her husband as he cried up the stairs, in a cautious voice:

"Hilda! There has been murder, Hilda!"

(To be continued.)

NATIVE OYSTERS.—During the last thirty years the price of native oysters (Whitstable) has more than quadrupled, if we accept the present value of the desiderated bivalve as a criterion. In 1825-6 the average price per bushel was 19s.; from that year till 1840-11, with trifling variations, the value consistently rose to £2 2s. the bushel. Only three times has it fallen to so low an average since. In the next four years oysters were very dear. In 1842-3 the price rose to £2 10s., the next year to £2 18s., and in 1844-5 to £3. They fell to £2 18s. in the succeeding season. These were the highest prices until very recently. From 1857 till the season 1861-2 the bushel was steadily quoted at £2 2s. In the succeeding year the value was £2 8s.; in the next season it rose to £3 8s.; and during 1864-5 it has been £4 to £4 10s.

LOVERS AND HUSBANDS.—Husbands, I am talking to you. Why don't you pay the same little attentions to your wives after marriage as before? When you are "courtin'," the dear little creature is an object of constant solicitude on your part. She must take care of her feet on a damp evening. You softly whisper in her ear that she must take care of her health for your sake. What charming disinterestedness! for your sake, not for hers. Then you very tenderly wrap her shawl about her, and keep your arm there to prevent the little witch from taking cold. Always on the alert, very thoughtful are these lovers for their intended comfort; their memories are very retentive. But, husbands, can you inform me why it is that you loose your memories soon after marriage? Why is it that many of you (I will not say all) neglect to pay these little attentions to your wives that are so essential to a woman's happiness?

Is it because she is less dear to you than of yore? Do you weary of her who left home, parents, brothers and sisters, for your sake—giving her happiness to a stranger's keeping? Do you weary of her you promised to love and cherish till death parts you? Is this the return you make for all she gave you? Those many little nameless attentions that make courtship so delightful, ought not to be discontinued after marriage. They are just as acceptable then as ever; and let me whisper in your ears, oh, husbands, they are the dream of woman's life—the flowers of her existence; flowers whose fragrance never pallis on the senses. If you want your wife to study your comfort and tastes, show that you appreciate her efforts to please you, by praising her. It goes a great way with us women. Avoid finding fault on every occasion. Many clouds have risen in the domestic sky, occasioned by fault-finding. Lovers, do not bestow all your attentions on your sweethearts, but reserve a few for your wives.

SWEET FLOWERS:

It is because flowers are such lovely emblems of innocence, so like the merry face of childhood, that they have a large place in our best affections.

They ever remind us of our days of boyhood and buoyancy, when Nature, our fond mother, sat upon the hills, clapping her hands with joy, and giving us all the earth, with the landscape and rocks, and hills, and forest, for our school and playground; when the young soul was just fresh from its home in heaven, and not yet corrupted and defiled by a cold, callous and calculating world; when quiet nooks enclosed us with their greenness, and we found companions in the wild bee, and the morning breezes, and in everything which wore the impress of beauty, whether animate or inanimate; when all things were clothed with beauty, and were worshipped with a veneration beyond utterance; when each leaf and flower was a palace of sweet sights and scents, and the bending boughs were woven into fairy bowers of enchantment, and touched us with heaven's own glorious sunshine; when we picked up lessons of love and delight by river sides, by brooks, and hawthorn paths, in quiet glens and in green fields, and inhaled from every passing breeze health, intelligence, and joy; when all things grew and expanded into broad and living hope, calm, lovely, promising and serene as a bright vision by a sick man's bed.

And then, too, the holy memories which they embalm in their folded buds and endewed chalices—memories fraught with sorrow, but not less welcome to our hearts.

Tender recollections, perchance, of parents now sleeping in green repose in the ivied churchyard, though far divided from us by a gulf of worldly cares and sordid interests, no longer controlling our actions with a judicious watchfulness and care, no longer checking us, as we are about to pluck the fatal weeds of folly, and to inhale the breath of the sinful blossoms which pleasure scatters in our path—beautiful and fragrant, but fraught with the bane of misery—luring us to tarry in voluptuous bowers, and steep our souls in sensual delights, where repentance and self-reproach, for precious time thus squandered and irrevocably lost, come upon us as a reward, and give, in return for excess of light, a mad-dening despair and blindness.

It is said that the marriage of the Princess Dagmar with the Cesarewitch will take place at Moscow during next summer, and that the Prince and Princess of Wales will be present on that occasion. The Princess Dagmar naturally changes her religion again, and for the third time.

IRISH PROSPECTS.—A letter from Dublin, written recently, says:—"Ireland enters the year 1866 in better circumstances and with brighter prospects than she has experienced for many years. There is a steady improvement in the condition of the farmers, who receive good prices for their produce and are enabled for the most part to meet their engagements with punctuality. There has been during the past year a considerable diminution in the number of small farmers, and the land is gradually passing into the hands of men who have the means of making it productive. There is no cry of distress from any part of the country.

SALT MINES.—The salt mines of Cracow were discovered in 1251. The length of the mines from east to west is above 6,000 feet; the breadth from north to south above 2,000; and they are 800 feet in depth. When a stranger wishes to visit these mines, he is habited in a suit of miner's clothes, and let down by machinery a perpendicular descent of 600 feet. The place is very dark; and the miner, who descends as a guide, strikes a light, and conducts the stranger forward through several gloomy winding passages, at

the end of which they descend by ladders 200 feet lower into a large cavern. Through this cavern they enter upon an open plain, peopled by the miners and their families, together with their horses, dogs, and other domestic animals. Nothing can exceed the brilliancy of this place, illuminated by thousands of lamps, reflecting their light upon the beautiful and transparent surface of the salt in every varied colour.

WON AND LOST.

I NEW perfectly well, when I paid my court to Eldred May, that I was not worthy of her. I had no encouragement, either, and should have been surprised if I had received any.

I wanted to win her, of course; I longed and prayed to do so, but I did not expect that either. I only loved her so that I was miserable out of her sight, and followed her about and laid my humble homage at her feet not less hopelessly than abjectly.

And this was not merely a lover's humility. Few men, with a proper appreciation of a pure and true woman, will feel themselves quite worthy to approach her, but there was even more than this feeling with me.

I knew that she was far above me in every way—in intellect as in morals, in worth as in wealth, in character as in person. I knew it; I felt it. I ground my teeth with senseless rage when I thought of it. But the fact was there.

And so was that other fact that I loved her so that she was the one woman in the world to me. She was my life, my sun. When she was absent I suffered a total eclipse, and lived in thick darkness.

It had not always been so. We—our families, I mean—were neighbours in town, and our country places on the Thames joined.

As Eldred advanced in age, she developed the noblest qualities of heart, and mind, and person; she became a splendid woman.

In the world, but not of it; filling the highest station with gentle unconsciousness; the fashion, but not a fashionable woman; copied, and noticed, and quoted, yet shrinking modestly from all prominence; gratifying her friends by the display of many graceful talents, yet never obtruding them upon the public; charitable, yet in a manner so quiet that she seemed ever to bear in mind the Scriptural injunction of secrecy. A woman who lived for others, for her home and friends, and the suffering, and turned from the world's adulation as if she already knew its hollowlessness, though she had seen but its fair and glittering exterior, and no disappointment had ever chilled her gentle and trusting heart; to me she seemed something so far apart from her kind that I hardly dared approach her.

I never felt so deeply my own insignificance, the narrowness of my aims, the poverty of my heart and mind, as when I was near her.

In vain I told myself that I ought to be more worthy of her, that there were within me untried powers which should not lie dormant; that it was in my power more nearly to approach her, if I would put forth my own capabilities.

But I was weak and vain. Too readily I yielded to the allurements of the world, and joined my companions in revel, when I should rather have employed my time in making myself worthy of Eldred.

The intimacy of our families brought me often in contact with Eldred May. Why with her I felt myself more worthy of her.

It was ever my wont to assume the tone of the society I frequented. Removed from her influence, I became the creature of my association; within it I grew more like herself.

And so it was that, remembering, as I did, no doubt, our early associations and the friendship of our youth, and seeing only that which was best in me and most akin to herself, Eldred loved me with all the freshness of her untried, girlish heart, and all the depth and intensity of her strong and powerful womanly nature.

It was long before I knew this, and long I tested both her patience and her love by my wayward conduct and fitful attentions. Accident at last accomplished for me what my own will might never have brought about.

In time of deep trouble and despair, when the black wings of the death angel enfolded her home, and there was a hush of dire expectation in the stately rooms where, till then, I had only seen her still and self-possessed: a word, a glance of appeal, an intangible something, which I could not define, sent the conviction rushing to my heart that I was beloved, sought, trusted by her who was the star, the sun of my existence.

In my joy—so overwhelming, so maddening that I almost forgot that she was suffering—I was selfish; and though I loved her, yet I thought first of myself.

Then, for I was afraid of her, and dare not speak the words that rose to my lips, I uttered only those commonplace words of consolation that fall so chillingly upon the ears of the suffering.

I knew that I pained her, but I was powerless to prevent it. I was unable then to say that I loved her, and I could say nothing else without losing that self-control that alone enabled me to hide my secret joy.

But after a few days, when the pangs of expectation had merged in the anguish of certainty, and Eldred was overwhelmed by the knowledge that she was motherless, I knew that my opportunity had come.

The intimacy of our families forbade that my visit should be considered an intrusion, and she received me in the seclusion of the little room where she and her mother had been wont to spend their mornings. A woman naturally seeks consolation from the best beloved in grief. Even his presence is comfort to her, and so, doubtless, Eldred May felt mine.

Unreproved, I drew her to my side, and folding my arms around her, laid her head upon my breast. I whispered words of love in her ear, and had my answer as she clung to me even closer, and wept out her joy and sorrow upon my heart.

She had lost her friend, her counsellor, and her pride, but she accepted me in the place of the lost, and bestowing a wifely love, transferred to me something of a daughter's reverence.

Women clothe their lovers in ideal virtues, which exist only in their own imaginations, or in the pure conception of the capabilities of the noblest masculine nature.

Knowing how poor was my nature in comparison with hers, she seemed, in loving me, at times almost lowered to my standard. Her very contact with me, I sometimes thought, must deprave her, and then some glimpses I caught of the innermost recesses of her nature, made me too well aware of my mistake.

Far as she was above me, she had placed me by her side, adorned in all the ideal graces her imagination painted and her heart worshipped.

Heaven knows I did strive for a time steadily to deserve her. Then I wearied of the unnatural strain. I detested the falsehood of my life. My efforts became fitful, prompted alone by the stings of my conscience.

Vainly seeking an excuse for my more frequent lapses, I argued that Eldred had loved me as I was. She had not required, but only believed me to be better than my real self; that girls knew nothing of men's life; and it was unreasonable for them to build up an ideal, expecting men to conform to it.

And so gradually I returned to the haunts I had forsaken, and the habits I had abandoned in the early days of my happiness.

Much as I loved Eldred, I should have learned that unworthy as I was of her, her love was not sufficient for me. But I did not; and I allowed her also to be deceived. And yet I loved her, and even now I am incapable of comprehending the infatuation that made me cling to my vices at the risk of placing between myself and her a barrier so insurmountable.

During the long period of mourning that followed the death of her mother, Eldred observed the strictest seclusion, a course dictated far more by her feelings than by custom.

It was this, I think, that wearied me. I was fond of gaiety and the excitements of fashionable life. I loved Eldred, but the evening seemed long and dull spent by her side in the familiar parlour, when I gave up for it a brilliant party, or a wine supper with my cronies at the club.

Those who believe that love is always an absorbing passion will hardly credit this, but I was not one to give all even to the best beloved.

I like gaiety, amusement, excitement, and Eldred was grave, though cheerful, and full of the quiet and repose of a profound nature. The sparkling foam of society had no charms for her. She liked to search beneath the surface for the more solid attractions of taste and intellect. In this we differed widely, and time seemed only to increase the distance.

At last she could no longer be blind to the fact that I found constant attendance upon her wearisome. She was not one to complain, but I read something of her anguish in the paleness of her cheeks. No words were exchanged between us, and none were needed. I saw that she had begun to read me aright, and the fear of losing her prompted me to new exertions.

But her suspicions once aroused were not easily hushed to their former repose. She made no new demands upon me, but she continually sought how she should make those changes in her own conduct by which she might be more conformed to my wishes.

She re-entered society, and appeared often with me in public; she consulted me about her toilet, and the guests she should invite to the house of which she was now mistress.

I was foolish enough to be elated by these concessions, and to enjoy a sort of triumph in them. It is

almost incredible, but in this readiness to meet my wishes I found new means of torture for her.

I laughed at the elegant simplicity of her taste in dress, and recommended inharmonious tints, and bizarre arrangements; and when, shocked and mortified, she would gently insist on some modifications, I would taunt her with her unwillingness to please me, and the lack of affection it argued. So when I introduced to her people whom she could not but disapprove, I made it a test of her regard for me that she should make my friends—heaven save the mark!—cordially welcome.

I cannot explain to myself, more than to another, the state of mind in which I then lived. I was besotted by vanity and recklessness, I think, and anxious only to find in her, or to create in her, some error in taste or judgment by which I might measure and palliate my own shortcomings.

Eldred's love was measured by the power and intensity of her nature, but the very strength of her judgment and clearness of her intellect gave her a possibility of control in proportion to even her most powerful feelings. She had pride and firmness, and principles as immutable as their foundation—truth.

My weak nature could not long prevail in a strife against hers, even with her love, an enemy in her camp, insidiously aiding me. I saw the struggle going on, but I did not then appreciate it, and besides, I had seen her love for me win so many victories in minor matters that I thought it must be all.

Thus, when her decision came, and was announced, it stunned me like the fall of an avalanche. That she whom I so loved, and who so loved me, should cast me, even with tears and lamentations over the martyrdom of her love, was to me simply incredible and past belief. Since the acknowledgment of our love it had seemed to me eternal.

All the ages I thought could neither change nor alienate it, else had I not dared to presume so upon its strength. And now before me stood that frail girl, worn thin by suffering, and pallid by the agony her resolve had cost her, calmly pronouncing the doom of that love and the fiat of our separation.

"We can never be happy," she said, "our natures can never assimilate. Mine refuses to be degraded through its love, and yours will not be lifted up. Let us each go on our way—and find what peace we may in separate lives."

It was in vain I pleaded, and raved, and stormed. Her resolve had not been lightly made, and was not to be lightly changed. We parted then, and months passed ere we met again.

Convinced that Eldred's decision was unalterable, I left the country at once. Our bridal trip, Eldred's and mine, was to have been to Paris. I thought of it as, almost like a felon, bidding farewell to none, I stole on board the ship, and creeping carefully out of sight of any chance friends, tossed below in my uneasy berth till the rippling of water beneath the bows, and the clank of the machinery told that we had started.

At this very hour Eldred lay prostrated by the fearful illness that followed swift upon the close of that dire struggle through which she had just past. But of this I knew nothing till long afterward, or I must have made sincere efforts for her pardon and my own reformation. To know that her love for me had wrought much suffering must have furnished me a motive all but irresistible.

But this was not to be. While she lay prostrated before the warring forces of life and death, I was borne afar with hate and revenge struggling in my soul.

For, much as I loved—as I still love Eldred—wounded vanity made me revengeful. I wanted to wound her in the most sensitive part, as she had hurt me.

I hated what I called her prudery and cant—her modesty, refined taste, and piety—and I resolved to give these feelings of hers a shock, if ever I should see her again.

Once landed and swallowed up in the great vortex of Parisian life, I plunged into the excitements and the vices of the gay city, attracted by the very difference from Eldred that at the same time had its marked repulsion.

I gambled, and drank, and rede, and visited, and drove away every thought of Eldred and my lost love by some new extravagance.

Six months after I entered Paris, I completed my mad career by marrying a dashing actress of a second-rate theatre, who had won a brief and not honourable popularity.

My associates professed to envy me; but not one of them, I think, would have rushed open-eyed into the same ruin that I thus invoked.

A week later I returned from the brief excursion that followed the marriage, and found a letter from my sister awaiting me at the English Embassy.

My father had been dead months, and it was needful that I should hasten home at once; and I must take with me Mathilde, the woman to whom, in a fatal moment, I had bound myself for life.

I shuddered at the thought, but it was my own

dead, and I must endure as best I might the consequences.

But I pictured to myself the haughty stare of my acquaintances, and the shrinking horror of my high-bred sisters, and Eldred—well, I was revenged on her, but how dearly it had cost me, and how the lengthened chain would fret and wear before it snapped at last, and a stilled heart was laid away in the grave.

I had sinned and I had my punishment. I found my family in seclusion, and, for myself, I plunged at once into the business which pressed upon me, making that an excuse for sharing their seclusion.

But Mathilde, accustomed to adulation and glare, had no taste for such a life; she was irrepressible, and would be seen everywhere.

I encountered all I expected, and more. My countrymen are quick in discovering pretenders to fashion; they detect tinsel, and they saw that Mathilde was not a lady.

Whispers came too, of what she had been, and ugly rumours that made me shrink more as I heard them.

People shunned her and I shared the punishment. But the hardest of all was my encounter with Eldred. Mathilde was leaning on my arm, exquisitely dressed, but chattering loudly, and glancing about with bold, free eyes, when the stately, quiet figure approached.

I saw the serene gravity of the face break up as she caught sight of me and my companion, then a shadow, half grieved, half wondering, flit across her pale features. But it was gone in an instant.

Her quiet voice greeted me, her little hand lay for an instant untrebling in mine; calmly she acknowledged my wife; then, serene and still, she passed on and was lost amidst the thronging crowd. And then I knew that for ever the struggle was past. Naught that I could do could affect her more, and I knew that, as the crowd swallowed her up and bore her from my sight, the days and the years were to bear her ever away from me, and she was lost to me for evermore.

M. C. V.

ASCOT GRAND STAND.—During the recent gales the roof of the new entrance to the Grand Stand, Ascot, lately built by Messrs. Oades & Son, was blown off in one mass, splitting several of the timbers. This immense weight of seven tons was carried several feet. The permanent part of the structure was not injured.

A NEW system has been adopted in Paris for enabling visitors to see at a glance what apartments are let in the various districts. A register is to be hung up in the hall of each maire giving this information, not only for the district in which the maire happens to be, but also for the other districts.

M. BERRIER, whose seventy-seventh birthday has just been celebrated by his friends, and whose health never was better, is preparing to plead before the Castres tribunal the last will of Father Lacordaire, which is disputed by the only living relation of that great orator.

It used to be the courtly fashion to tell people to go to Bath; we tell them to go to Japan. They can buy a first-class house there for about £6, and live comfortably in it for a penny a day. Servants charge two shillings a month, and a horse and groom may be had for the same time for seven shillings.

THE PASSPORT SYSTEM.—A convention has been concluded between Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, and Wurtemburg, exempting travellers, on entering or leaving those States, from the obligation of having passports. Baden and Oldenburg are willing to adhere to the convention, which came into force on the 1st ult.

It is a fact in arithmetic not generally known, that if a number be reversed and the lower deducted from the higher, the remainder is always divisible by 3 or by 9 without leaving any fraction. Thus:—From 6081 take 1366 there remains 4,615, which, divided by 3, is 1,605, and by 9 is 535, and the same with every other integer.

LARGE FLIGHTS OF WILD FOWL.—On January the 9th, at daybreak, immense flocks of wild ducks, teal, and widgeon, hovered in the air on the south side of the Thames, as if driven by stress of hard weather. They finally proceeded towards the south coast. The appearance of wild fowl in Surrey indicates winter in the north.

ANTS' EGGS.—It appears that last October a poor woman was taken up by one of the foresters at Fontainebleau for having carried away quantities of ants' eggs from a foreman. Ants abound in the Fontainebleau forest, and instead of wishing to get rid of them, the administration of the woods and their value preserve them carefully, on account of their value as food for all species of game, but more especially for young partridges. Many varieties of seeds, &c., have been tried as a substitute, but nothing has proved so nutritious to the 5,000 or 6,000 pheasants preserved

in the imperial shooting-grounds as the ant. A proof of the value of ants' eggs is the frequent attempts made by all the poor residing in the neighbourhood to carry off supplies of this strange edible in order to sell them to the proprietors of private pheasantry. The forest laws, therefore, have constituted into a fraud the act of rifling an ant-hill of its store of eggs, and the poor woman cited before the tribunal as guilty of this act was fined.

BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER.

BY E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
Author of "Self-Made," "All Alone," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Before I trust my fate to thee,

Or place my hand in thine,

Before I let thy future give

Colour and form to mine—

Before I peril all for thee,

Question thy soul to-night for me.

Look deeply now! If thou canst feel

Within thy inmost soul

That thou has kept a portion back,

While I have staked the whole,

Let no false pity spare the blow.

But in true mercy tell me so.

Aron.

She could ask no more than that of earth or heaven. And what comfort she took in preparing for his arrival!

Colonel Eastworth, like most middle aged gentlemen of a certain class, was an epicure, and his betrothed bride knew it.

First, she went to the kitchen and gave the cook very particular directions concerning the preparation of certain dainty dishes sure to delight the fastidious palate of the expected guest; then she called the housemaid, and went to get the spare rooms ready for his accommodation.

Dr. Rosenthal's house was a large, square, brick building, standing in its own grounds, which, even in winter looked very bright and cheerful with its many evergreens.

There were long vine-shaded porches before every floor in front of the house, which was of three stories, with basement and attic.

There was a large hall running from front to back through the centre of each floor, and having two rooms on each side.

The basement contained the kitchen, laundry, servants' room, and cellar. The first floor contained, on the right hand of the broad entrance hall, the long drawing-rooms, connected or divided at will by sliding doors; and on the left hand, the family library in front, and the dining-room at back.

The second floor contained, on the right of the hall, the minister's private apartments, consisting of a bed-chamber and a study, and on the left, Erminie's bed-room and a private sitting-room.

The third floor comprised two suites of spare rooms, neatly furnished and well kept, for the accommodation of visitors.

To this third floor, Erminie, attended by her handmaid, repaired. She opened the front windows of the left suite of rooms, letting in flood of sunlight to the beautiful parlour, while her attendant knelt down before the grate and began to light the fire, which was always kept ready laid for kindling. Everything was in such exquisite order that there was but little else to be done than to warm and air the rooms. But when the fire was burning brightly, Erminie drew the sofa up on one side of the hearth, and the easy chair up on the other, and placed a foot-stool and a sofa-stand before each. Then she went down into the library, and brought up the magazines of the month and the papers of the day and placed them on the centre table. And finally, she went to the conservatory and gathered a few choice winter roses and geraniums, and placed them in a glass-green Bohemian vase, and brought it and set it on the mantel-piece, where the fragrance of the flowers filled the room.

Then, leaving her handmaid to prepare the adjoining bed-chamber, she went down to put a few graceful finishing touches to the arrangements of the drawing-rooms, library and dining-parlour.

Next to the delight of a mother preparing for the visit of her son is the delight of a girl preparing for the comfort of her betrothed lover.

Erminie shared her father's religious belief in the sacredness and inviolability of betrothal; and she seemed to herself little less than a wife making ready for the reception of her husband.

She ordered the tea-table to be set in the library; and never was a tea-table more exquisitely neat and dainty in all its arrangements than this which was prepared under the immediate supervision of the minister's daughter. She knew that the library was the favourite room with their visitor as well as with her father and herself. And never before did it look more inviting than on this evening, when it was made ready to receive their most welcome guest.

The fire in the grate burned clearly, and its ruddy glow was reflected back by the amber-coloured window-curtains, and chair-covers, and carpet, and by the gilded frames of the pictures that filled up the spaces between the book-cases on the walls, and by the silver service on the elegant tea-table.

When Erminie had seen these arrangements completed, she contemplated the effect with a smile of satisfaction, and then went to make her own toilet.

Erminie's favourite home dress for the evening, even at this season of the year, was white.

On this occasion she dressed herself in a soft white alpaca, made with a high neck and long, loose sleeves, and trimmed with light blue velvet ribbons.

She wore her rich auburn hair in natural ringlets and without a single ornament; a simple toilet, but perfectly in keeping with her own delicate beauty.

When she was quite ready, she went down into the library, where she was joined by her father, and where they awaited the arrival of their visitor.

Colonel Eastworth came in good time. Erminie's quick ears were the first to catch the sound of the carriage wheels as they turned into the gate and rolled up the avenue towards the house.

Dr. Rosenthal himself went out to receive the guest and show him up to his rooms.

Erminie, who had been so very busy in preparing

for him, was now seized with a strange timidity which prevented her from going forth to welcome him. But she rang for the housemaid to show Colonel Eastworth's servant where to carry his master's trunk, and then she went back to the library and sat down to wait until her father should return with her lover.

In a few minutes they came downstairs and entered the room.

Erminie half arose to receive her betrothed. She saw his look of appreciation and approbation as he glanced around the room before his eye fell upon herself and he advanced towards her.

"This looks like a little paradise, after the pandemonium in which I have lately existed. A paradise, of which my lady is the peri," he murmured, in a low voice, as he lifted her hand, and bowing over it, pressed it to his lips.

Erminie blushed beautifully, and murmured something in reply to the effect that she hoped he would be happy with them.

"Are you ready for tea, papa dear?" inquired Erminie, with her hand upon the bell.

"Yes, yes—quite; and so is Eastworth. Have it directly."

Erminie rang, and tea was immediately served.

Everything was in perfect neatness and taste. Colonel Eastworth's favourite delicacies were on the table. Erminie presided over the urn.

"A beautiful contrast this to the hurley-burley of the hotel ordinary!" said Eastworth, frankly.

"You should not be too hard on the hotels. How is it possible they should be any better than they are, in their present over-crowded state?" said the charitable minister.

And then their conversation left the hotel grievance, and turned upon more agreeable subjects.

When tea was over and the service cleared away, Erminie brought Gustave Doré's illustrations of Don Quixote, and laid the volume on the table.

It was a rare work, and a new purchase, and it had cost the good minister a round sum to import it from Paris.

But Erminie had expressed a wish to possess it; and her father never denied his beloved daughter anything that she wanted, which it was possible for him to procure.

Colonel Eastworth had never seen it; so Erminie had the delight of being the first to show it to him.

There are, perhaps, about a hundred large plates—each plate being a perfect work of art, to be studied separately and carefully, and with ever-increasing appreciation and enjoyment of its truthfulness to nature and richness in humour.

In the examination of this book, the hours sped quickly away; so quickly, that ten o'clock, the regular bedtime of the quiet household, came and passed unheeded.

But if the striking of the clock did not disturb our laughing party something else soon after did—the ringing of the street door bell.

Dr. Rosenthal himself went out to see what this very late summons might mean.

It was the postman of the district. And the minister started, for this was an unheard-of hour for the postman to present himself.

"Yes, doctor, it is I," said the man, handing a letter to the minister, "you see it came by the late mail, and being a foreign letter, I thought it might be from your son who went out to the Indies, and so I thought I wouldn't keep you waiting for it until the regular delivery to-morrow morning; but I would just step round with it to-night."

"A thousand thanks, my friend. It is from my son. It is in his handwriting. A thousand thanks, this is a real act of kindness, which I shall never cease to remember," said the minister, earnestly, as he received the letter.

"Oh, don't mention such a trifling, doctor. Good night, sir," said the kind-hearted postman, taking himself off.

"Erminie, my dear, here is a letter from your brother," exclaimed the minister, bursting into the library with all the vehemence of a schoolboy.

"Oh!" cried his daughter, jumping up to meet him.

And for the time being Colonel Eastworth was "left out in the cold."

"Ah! pray excuse us, sir! Have we your permission?" inquired the minister, suddenly recollecting himself and bowing to his guest.

"Oh, certainly, certainly! Am I not one of yourselves? Pray do not mind me," replied Colonel Eastworth, smiling, and then turning his whole attention to Gustave Doré, which lay still before him.

Dr. Rosenthal opened the letter; and then the father and daughter held it between them, bent their heads over it and read it together.

It was the first letter they had received from Justin—the letter that he had written and posted at Porto Praya.

It merely told them of the ship's prosperous voyage and safe arrival at Porto Praya, and of the well-being of all the passengers.

"He does not seem to have made much progress in his love-chase, however," said Dr. Rosenthal.

"Papa, dear, I think his delicate respect for his lady-love would prevent him from writing on the subject, even to us," suggested Erminie.

"Well, may be so, my dear. There seems to me to be a great deal of false delicacy in love affairs now-a-days. I hope there is as much true durability."

"I wonder why Britomarte did not write to me," murmured Erminie, with a grieved look.

"She probably has done so; these foreign mails, especially from small foreign ports, are very irregular and uncertain. And your letter may have been altogether lost or only delayed," said the minister.

"Justin writes that we need not expect to hear from him again until he reaches and writes from the Cape of Good Hope."

"Yes, unless, he says, between the Cape Verde Islands and the Cape of Good Hope, they should speak a homeward-bound ship, in which case he would dispatch a letter by her. But now," said the minister, dropping his voice, "we must put up our letter and join our visitor."

"I hope you have had good news from my friend Justin and his party," said Colonel Eastworth, as they joined him at the table.

"Excellent! They have had a very prosperous voyage as far as Porto Praya, with every prospect of a continuance of fine weather, thank heaven! There, you can see what he says, if you will take the trouble to look over that letter," said the minister, putting the paper into the visitor's hands.

"Thanks," said Colonel Eastworth, with a bow.

Then he drew Erminie to his side, so that she could look over the letter again with him, and opened it, saying, with a smile:

"I know, of course, that you cannot read this too often."

"I believe you read my thoughts," answered Erminie, with a beautiful blush. "And—I do wish I could read yours as well," she added, gravely.

"I wish you could, my dearest. You would know then for yourself how perfectly I love you," he replied, in a low whisper.

"I know that already. I never for a moment doubted your love. What, indeed, but perfect love could draw you down to me?" murmured Erminie, in a voice tremulous with emotion.

"God bless you in your faith, my dearest! But why, then, do you wish to read my thoughts?" inquired Colonel Eastworth, with a sidelong glance towards the minister, to see if he was attending to their conversation.

But no—Dr. Rosenthal was deep in the study of Gustave Doré.

"Why do you wish to read my thoughts, Erminie?" repeated her lover.

"Oh! I do not know. Sometimes when you have been spending an evening alone with me, you have been so moody, so grave, so thoughtful, so absent-minded, so utterly oblivious of all around you; so utterly oblivious even of me," replied Erminie, sadly.

"Of you! Never, Erminie. Never, for an instant, better angel of my life!" exclaimed Eastworth, roughly, though still in a suppressed voice. Then he paused and reflected for a few moments, and then he said: "Sweet girl, I am no longer a young man, and middle age brings with it trials and responsibilities with which I do not wish to burden your gentle heart. No, Erminie, I am no longer a young man. I remember sometimes with pain, with grave misgivings—ay, almost with despair—that I am your senior by full twenty years!"

"Oh! why do you say that? I never knew and never asked myself whether you were thirty, or forty, or fifty! But I do know that I—I—" She broke down in the sweet confession she was trying to make.

"Then you do not love me the less, because, like Othello, I am somewhat 'declined into the vale of years?'" Eastworth asked.

"Oh, no, no, no! for that's not much." And besides, what does the inspired writer you have just quoted say about this?

Let still the woman take
An elder than herself; so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart,"
murmured Erminie, lifting her head, blushing intensely at her own audacity in quoting Shakespeare upon such a subject.

"Yes," answered Colonel Eastworth, involuntarily tightening his arms around her waist. "Yes, dearest, supposing that the woman ever reasons coolly, on the subject of her choice, as few women ever do, and as I am glad you do not! I wish you to love me for the woman's simple reason—because you love me.

All other reasons are false! For if you love me for good looks, they will certainly change, and may possibly pall upon your sight even before they change! If for good qualities, you may discover that I do not possess them. Love me just because you love me, my dearest, so that you may never have cause to change."

He spoke so low as scarcely to break the dead silence of the room—a silence which was so profound that when the mantle clock began to strike it sounded like an alarm.

"Eleven o'clock! Bless my soul! Erminie, ring for the bed-room candles!" exclaimed the doctor, rousing himself.

Erminie obeyed. The housemaid appeared, with three little wax candles, in three little silver candlesticks.

"We have no gas in the bed-rooms. I consider it unhealthy. Good night," said the doctor, as he lighted a candle and handed it to his guest.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
A possible future shine?
Wherso thy life could henceforth breathe,
Untouched—unshamed by mine?
If so, at any loss, or cost,
Oh, tell me before all is lost!
Is there within thy soul a need
That mine cannot fill?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now, lest at some future day
My whole life wither and decay.

A. S.

ERMINIE was a very lark for early rising. Summer and winter she was always up with the sun. Indeed she purposely slept with the foot of her bed towards the east windows of her room and left her shutters unclosed, so that the earliest beams of the sun might shine in upon her and kiss her eyelids into light. It was so beautiful to be awakened each morning by the touch of the sun, she said.

It was her daily habit, very soon after the servants were astir, to be downstairs, busy with her household duties.

From the time that she had been brought from school and installed in the position as the young mistress of her father's house, she became very appreciative of the responsibilities of that position, and gave her personal attention to all the details of domestic economy.

And she did this with so much success that the good minister had excellent reasons for boasting that they—himself and his daughter—were always prepared to receive their friends and could never be taken by so much surprise as to be put to inconvenience by the sudden arrival of visitors at their house.

On the morning succeeding the domestication of Colonel Eastworth in the family, Erminie, restless with excess of happiness, arose even earlier than usual.

She went down into the library to open and air it, and to have the fire lighted and the table set for breakfast under her own supervision.

This was a peculiarly pleasant morning-room, especially in winter; for it had an eastern aspect, and the newly risen sun, shone brightly in through all the windows.

Here the minister's little family liked to breakfast as well as to sup. The communicating dining-room at the back was seldom used, except for its legitimate purpose of dining.

Erminie completed the arrangement of the room and of the table—even to the laying of the morning papers ready, so that her father and her lover might look over the news as they lingered over their coffee. And then she sat down and awaited their coming.

And half an hour later, when Doctor Rosenthal and Colonel Eastworth entered the room, a very pleasant scene greeted them.

The morning sun was shining brightly in, lighting up the amber-coloured hangings, the gilded picture frames, the glass book-cases, and the silver service of the breakfast-table.

She arose with a smile to greet her father and her lover.

Her father kissed her fondly, and then took up a morning paper and appeared to become absorbed in its contents.

Her lover drew her away to the sunny window, and whispered:

"My dearest, I recognized your loving care in every single arrangement for my comfort in my rooms last night."

"I am so glad that you can be pleased with anything I can do for you; for, oh! it is so little I can do!" she murmured, softly.

"You can love me! you do love me, all unworthy as I am of your sweet affections; and that love of

yours makes your 'lightest act for me a priceless service!'" he replied, fervently, pressing her hand to his lips.

Breakfast was served. But for some reason or other, the social morning meal did not pass off so cheerfully as it might be expected to do. And as soon as it was over, Colonel Eastworth excused himself and went out.

Dr. Rosenthal lighted his pipe, and went on the front porch for his morning smoke and promenade, and Erminie went gaily about her household business—ordered the dinner, put fresh flowers in the vases in the drawing-room, and then sat down to her needle-work.

To suit Colonel Eastworth's known habits, the dinner hour at the minister's house was changed from two o'clock to six; but Erminie took good care that her father should not suffer by the change; and she had his luncheon punctually on the table at two.

Colonel Eastworth came home to the late dinner. He was grave, absorbed, absent-minded. He sometimes shook off this pre-occupation, but it was with an evident effort.

After dinner, they withdrew to the drawing-room, where coffee was served, and then Dr. Rosenthal took a pipe and went off to his study to smoke and read.

Erminie was left alone with her betrothed. A sort of shyness that she never would get rid of, when left tête-à-tête with her lover, induced her to rise and open the piano:

She sang and played, one after another, his favourite songs; and in many of them he joined his voice to hers.

"Oh, what is it that troubles you so? Tell me! Why should the singing of that song have shaken you so much?"

He put his hand out and drew her around to his side, and with his arm around her waist, holding her in a close embrace, he answered, with more composure than he had yet shown, but gravely and sadly:

"There are struggles, my Minie—divided duties—that tear and rend a man's soul asunder as wild horses might dismember a martyr's body!"

She laid her hand upon his writhen brow; all her timidity was forgotten in her desire to console him. She pressed her lips to his forehead, and whispered:

"Your troubles are all mine; let me comfort you if I can. Show me how to do it, my dearest, oh, my dearest!"

"Some day, better angel of my life, I will tell you all. Not now! I can't bear to do it, nor could you bear to hear it!"

"I can bear all things—all things for your sake!"

And the door opened quietly, and the old doctor, who had finished his pipe, sauntered into the room, to spend the rest of the evening with his children, as he called these two.

One evening they were, as usual, alone in the drawing-room.

She was seated at the piano, singing his favourite song.

He was bending over her, turning the music, but thinking far more of her than of anything else. She was singing the refrain of that song so full of wild, sad, almost despairing aspiration:

Beloved eye! beloved star!

Thou art so near, and yet—so far!

He bent lower over her, until his quick breath stirred her bright auburn ringlets. As she ceased singing, he whispered in a voice vibrating with intense feeling:

"Beloved star! Thou art so near, and yet—so far! Oh, my dearest! Oh, Erminie! do you know—do you know what my trial is? To be with you every hour of the day, your betrothed husband, sharing the same house, sitting at the same fireside, mocked with the appearance of the closest intimacy, yet kept at the sternest distance. Oh, Erminie! I cannot bear it longer, love. The period of my probation must—it must be shortened. Say, love, shall I speak to your father once more? Shall I implore him to fix an early day for our union?"

The colour deepened on Erminie's cheek, and she hesitated a few moments before she replied:

"We are very happy now; we are together almost all the time. What more can we require? My dear father is very much opposed to our marriage taking place before two years. And why should we hurry him? Surely, surely you do not dream that in these two years I shall change towards you?" she suddenly inquired.

"No, my angel, no! I dream nothing of you but to your honour. I know that you are truth itself. But I cannot wait two years to call you mine, my love! I must—I must have your consent to speak to your father and implore him to shorten the time of our betrothal."

"I was very happy," said Erminie, thoughtfully, "but I cannot be so any longer if you are discontented;

for your discontent would be mine. Speak to my dear father, if you will."

"Thanks, dearest, thanks! I will lose no time," he said.

And he pressed her to his bosom for a moment, and then hurried out of the room to look for Dr. Rosenthal.

He found the minister in his study, sitting in his easy-chair, enjoying his pipe, and enveloped in a cloud of aromatic smoke.

"Ah! is it you, Eastworth? Sit down; take out your pipe—I know you carry it about you—and try some of this tobacco; it is prime," said the doctor, cordially, pushing another easy-chair towards his guest, and setting his box of tobacco near to his hand.

"Thanks," said Eastworth, availing himself at once of his old friend's invitation, as the quickest method of conciliating him.

"I think you will find that tobacco about the finest you ever tried. It is not to be bought, my friend; at any price, anywhere. That lot was sent me as a Christmas gift by the Captain-General of Cuba, whose German master I was at the time that his father was Spanish Minister here. Try it, and tell me what you think of it."

"It is very fine. What an advantage it is, by the way, for an old master to have so many grateful pupils, conveniently located in various parts of the world, from which they can send you the choicest products of their vicinage. But, dear sir, I did not seek you for the sole pleasure of a smoke in your company. I wished to have a talk with you."

"Exactly! So did I. I just felt like having a little conversation. I was longing for some one to talk to about old Herodotus. What a magnificent old fellow he was, to be sure!"

"Yes, sir, no doubt; and we will discuss his merits some other time, if you please. To-night I wish to speak on another theme—your daughter," said Colonel Eastworth, earnestly.

The old minister laid down his pipe, and turned to the speaker.

The name of his daughter was powerful enough, at any time, to bring him all the way back from the past, and fix his attention on the present.

"Yes, well, what of Erminie?" he inquired, anxiously.

Colonel Eastworth reflected for a moment, and then plunged headlong into the subject.

"I would submit to you, sir, respectfully but very earnestly, that an engagement of two years will be intolerably tedious to me. I come to entreat you to shorten the period. There is really no reason why we should not be married at once. I love your daughter devotedly, and I am so blessed as to have won her affections. My means are ample, and I shall be only too happy to make any settlements upon my bride that you may please to name. My character and position I hope you know are unimpeachable."

"All that is true, Eastworth—quite true!" said the old doctor, taking up his pipe and putting it in his mouth, and puffing away leisurely.

"Then, sir, let me hope that you will re-consider your decision, and allow the marriage to take place," pleaded the colonel.

"No, Eastworth. I cannot do that, my friend, I really cannot. I regret extremely to deny you anything—you must know that I do. I wish to accommodate you in every possible manner—you must feel sure of that; but I cannot give you my daughter yet awhile. I cannot, my dear Eastworth."

"Perhaps, sir," suggested the colonel, with rather a crestfallen air, "you do not wish to lose your sweet daughter's society just yet? Well, even if you give her to me now, you need not part with her for some time to come. I am here for an indefinite period."

"It is not that, Eastworth!—no, it is not that. I am not thinking of myself, or of the solitude that may be my fate when she is married. I am thinking only of my dear child's welfare. She is much too young to be married yet. Think of it!—she is not yet seventeen! Her youth is an objection to her marriage that cannot be set aside, Eastworth, by any agent except time. You must be patient, my friend."

"But, sir, hear me yet farther. Does not the fact of my own mature age lessen the objection of her extreme youth? What she lacks in experience and knowledge of the world can I not supply?" urged the colonel.

The old doctor smiled.

"Doubtless," he answered; "but can you supply her with the physical strength needed to meet the exigencies of married life, and which these next two years will give her, if she remains single? No, Eastworth, you cannot!—No earthly power can!"

"Sir, all this is very trying. I adore your daughter!"

"Ah—yes, yes, yes, I know!" said the old doctor, knocking the ashes out of his pipe and refilling it.

"I admired her mother, whom she very much resembles; but I had to wait four or five years for her. It was trying, if I remember right, but I survived it."

"Can I not persuade you to change your decision in this affair?" pleaded the colonel.

"Well, Eastworth," said the doctor, once more removing his pipe to answer, "of all created beings a lover is certainly the most selfish; though that seems a paradox, for love and selfishness should be antitheses. No, nothing on earth would induce me to do my dear child such a wrong, as to consent to her marrying under the age of eighteen, which is young enough in all conscience for a girl to take upon herself the responsibility of matrimony. Anything else on earth to please you I would do, except this thing in which the welfare of my dear child is concerned. If you will calmly reflect, Eastworth, you will see the wisdom of my course."

"Certainly, Dr. Rosenthal," said the colonel, with a sad, but earnest frankness. "Certainly I have nothing to complain of, but everything to be grateful for, in your course of conduct towards me. You have given me the freedom of your house, and the society of your daughter, my betrothed. These are inestimable privileges and blessings. And you have my deepest gratitude."

"Nonsense, my dear fellow, there is nothing to make a fuss about. You are my daughter's affianced; you are my son; you are one of us, and as welcome as Justin himself," said the doctor.

So the interview terminated.

Colonel Eastworth rejoined Erminie in the drawing-room.

She looked up inquiringly as he entered.

"Your father is obstinate, my sweet love. I cannot win his consent to my wishes, upon any terms," he said, with a profound sigh.

"Then we must be patient. My dear father is very good to us in all other respects; in this also, perhaps, though we do not know it," replied Erminie, gently.

"It may be so, love," said Eastworth.

"And you know that if our engagement were to last ten years or twenty, and if, in the meantime, you should travel to the uttermost ends of the earth, and I should never see or hear from you, I should still be true to you—yes, true as truth."

"I know it, my only love. And I shall soon put your truth to a terrible test."

(To be continued.)

SOME years ago it was found necessary to re-pave the town of Basingstoke not many months after the pavement had been laid, owing to the growth of large fungi under the stones, which completely lifted them out of their beds. One of these stones measured 22 in. by 21 in., and weighed 83 lb.; and the resistance offered by the mortar which held it in its place would probably be a greater obstacle even than the weight.

The first railway sold up for debt has just been disposed of at Dublin in the Court of Bankruptcy, before Judge Berwick. The line was the Wexford and Bagalstown Railway, twenty-one miles in extent and in perfect working order. Creditors to the amount of £67,000 were either present personally, or by representation. The line was knocked down to Mr. Mott, a barrister, for the sum of £25,000. It is said this gentleman has purchased in trust for some London capitalists.

As their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales were out hunting with the West Norfolk fox-hounds, at Bagthorpe, recently, an accident occurred which might have been attended with serious consequences. During a sharp run after a fox, the horse rode by Mr. Beart, jun., mastered its rider, who was unable to pilot it, and it cannoned against the Prince of Wales's chestnut, and unseated his Royal Highness, who, fortunately, alighted on his feet, and was happily unhurt. His Royal Highness re-mounted his horse, which had been caught and brought back to the Prince, and soon rejoined the field.

A TURTLE IN CORNWALL.—On January 8, as some children were playing on the beach at Hemmick, one mile to the westward of the Dodman Head, they saw a turtle endeavouring to make its way up a small stream of water which flows across the beach into the sea. Having fetched a gaff from their cottage, they hooked it out of the stream and secured it. It was taken on the following day, and its weight was 23lb. It was taken to Megavissey, and bought by a fisherman there to send to the London market. If, therefore, its shell is wanted by any collector, the purchaser in town might probably be traced. I believe the turtle is numbered amongst our British reptiles; but whether this specimen had crossed the Atlantic, being driven here by the fierce south and south-westerly winds we have had this autumn, or whether it was swept from the deck of some homeward bound ship, must be mere matter of conjecture.

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[DANGERS THICKEN.]

EVA ASHLEY.

CHAPTER XLVII.

ANOTHER PURSUER ON MRS. ASHLEY'S TRACK.

BESSIE took refuge in the private parlour attached to their suite of apartments, believing that Delancey would be sure to seek her there before he took his departure.

She knew that the Welby family were in consultation on Kate's destiny in Mrs. Welby's chamber, and she felt secure at least an hour of uninterrupted solitude, provided Delancey did not make his appearance. She unconsciously listened for every step, and flushed or grew pale as they were mistaken for the one she believed must yet come.

Her expectations were not doomed to disappointment.

So soon as Delancey had completed his arrangements for leaving Scotland, he sought the parlour in which he had of late spent so many pleasant hours.

With scarcely defined feelings as to what he desired to gain in this parting interview, he knocked at the door and entered the room, to find the only one he particularly cared to meet sitting alone with a book in her hand, which she did not seem to have been reading.

Delancey quietly said :

"I have called to bid you farewell, Miss Ashley. You have probably heard that the illness of a friend summons me away."

Suddenly chilled by his changed manner she replied, quite as coolly :

"Yes—Rufus told me at dinner that you were going. I hope your friend is not seriously ill."

"No—I fancy not; but he is an eccentric person—a seafaring man just from a voyage. As he has few friends—in fact, none that I know of who have a nearer interest in him than I possess—I feel bound to go to him without delay."

"Is the gentleman a relation?" she presently asked, to break the awkward pause that ensued.

"No—I first made his acquaintance on shipboard. My father died at sea, Miss Ashley, and the kindness shown to him in his last illness by Captain Martin bound me to him for life. I would go to his assistance in similar circumstances, if he summoned me from the other side of the world."

"That would be but right, Mr. Delancey; such a claim as that is sacred—of course you should lose no time in going to your friend."

She scarcely knew what she was saying, but she looked up; their eyes met, a flash of electric light seemed to issue from them, and for the space of ten seconds the gaze of each one was held spellbound by that of the other.

All that a look could express was said by that one, without any volition on the part of the two who had so many reasons for, as yet, concealing the interest they felt in each other.

At length Bessie tore her eyes away from the fascination that flashed into them from the dark orbs of Delancey, and a rosy flush mounted to her cheeks.

He clasped her hand fervently in his own, and in a low, excited tone, said :

"Farewell, Miss Ashley; I shall see you again before your tour is ended. Welby will keep me informed of your whereabouts. Present my adieux to the other ladies, for I have scarcely a moment to remain, even if I dared do so at present."

Delancey left her standing there, palpitating with shame and indignation at the *exposé* she had made of her feelings, and the evident gratification it seemed to afford him. He had taken with him the assurance of her regard, while he shrank from committing himself in words. Such was her unjust thought, for at that moment a wild and blissful hope was thrilling the heart of her lover, and he was resolving to risk everything to make her his own.

He went on his way that night, buoyant as a lark, though he was going to the sick bed of one he loved. The next morning he found himself in London, and hastened at once to the boarding house in which Captain Martin usually stayed.

Delancey found his friend still confined to his bed, though not dangerously indisposed. He was irritable, as most active men are while confined to a single room; and it taxed his utmost skill to amuse him and keep him quiet as long as the physician declared it to be necessary to do so. He nursed him carefully, read to him, and while Martin slept, he amused himself by painting a miniature of Bessie on ivory.

Truthfully did the lover's memory serve him, and the radiant image which had so deeply enchanted him soon smiled back into his eyes with that look of living light which had laid bare her secret.

When Martin awoke, the young artist would conceal the fair vision, on the contemplation of which he nursed his passion; but one day he was not quite rapid enough in his movements, the sick man detected the attempt to put something from his sight, and he peevishly asked :

"What are you hiding from me, Delancey? If you have anything that affords interest to yourself, I

really think you might show it to an old hulk laid up at anchor as I am."

After some hesitation, the young man replied ; "I will show you a picture I have been painting. But I warn you not to criticize it so severely as your usual habit is, for I believe that I am more than half in love with the original. If I had not considered her future before my own, I should have told her so before I left her."

"Umph! Thinking of marrying, I suppose, on the pittance you can win by your brush. I hope, for the sake of your sanity, that the girl has some money of her own."

Martin impatiently held out his hand, and without replying to his last words, Delancey placed the square of ivory within it. He glanced at the sweet face, and in an excited tone asked :

"Who is this? It is the strangest resemblance I ever saw in my life. She might be Frank Wilde's daughter; but that is impossible, for his child died."

"No—that young lady is not Mr. Wilde's daughter."

"Who, then, is she? What name does she bear?"

"That is Miss Ashley. She is the grand-daughter of Squire Ashley of—"

But his further explanations were cut short by the excitement of Martin. He raised himself upon his elbow and thundered :

"Who did you say she is?"

"The grandchild of a distinguished man of large fortune. But unluckily for me, the old man left his estate to his two grandchildren on the condition that they shall marry each other. The one that refuses loses all. If I were only independent I would try my cause with Bessie, for I am desperately *éprise* with her, and I have a faint hope that I might succeed in winning her for my own."

"Why can't you speak English?" growled the excited listener, who seemed to be making a great effort to control himself. "As to the girl, if she will have you, ask her frankly, and trust to providence for the rest. I tell you you're free to love her—to win her—in spite of Mr. Ashley's will; and when she knows what I can tell her, she would sooner starve than touch a penny of his estate, if she has in her the spirit of her father."

"Her father was the son of the old gentleman, Captain Martin; and from what my friend Welby told me about him, I should not think him anything to boast of."

"Umph! much he knew about it! I know a great deal more about her father than any one else living, but I cannot now explain how I came by that know-

ledge. You have furnished me with a clue to the most singular—But no, it will be wrong to enlighten you any further just now. If you truly love this young girl, tell her so as soon as may be, and in your honourable affection let her take refuge from the evils that threaten her. There—that is all I have to say at present."

Delancey was completely mystified, and he said : "I am sorry to hear you say that, for you have only bewildered me by what you have said. Will you not be induced to explain how you came to know anything of Miss Ashley, Captain Martin?"

"Miss D—" cried out the irascible invalid. "I did not say that I know anything about her; but I know something about the original of this picture, which I could tell if I chose, but I don't choose, and that's the end of it!"

Delancey gazed at him as if in doubt as to his perfect sanity.

He at length said :

"And in spite of this singular mystery, you still advise me to ask this young lady to be my wife?"

"Well—yes—if she is as innocent and charming as that bit of ivory looks, you may risk your fate with her, for one of her parents had honour and truth, if the other is—what I shan't at present say. Only let me get out of this bed, with strength enough left in my body to follow this thing up through all its windings, and if I don't make some pay for this, my name is not Jack Martin. I let her off for the first sin, but may Lucifer fly away with me if I do the same for this!"

The sailor's excitement threatened to bring back his fever, and much as his interest and curiosity were aroused, Delancey insisted that he should be quiet, and endeavour to compose himself.

After a good night's rest, he hoped to induce Martin to unravel the mystery to which he had referred; but his hopes were disappointed, for on the next and all the following days they spent together, the reserve of Captain Martin on this subject proved impene-trable.

He seemed to have made up his mind on the course it was expedient to pursue, and all the satisfaction Delancey could gain from him was the following remarks :

"You can marry the girl if you wish it, and if she will consent to have you. I possess the power to compel those people to give her to you, but she will have no fortune, mark that. When I see her, if I like her as well as I do you, I'll give you both the little I have saved, after I am gone. That will be nothing in comparison with the Ashley estate, but it will be honestly come by. Don't bother me about this affair any more, lad, for I am not going to tell you a thing about it till I have ascertained beyond a doubt that my suspicions are correct."

With this Delancey was forced to be contented; and glad of any excuse for laying his heart and hand at the feet of Bessie, he watched the progress of Martin's recovery with intense solicitude. He almost made up his mind that his old friend was slightly demented, and he wearied himself with conjecturing what could be the secret he so tenaciously guarded.

If, as Martin asserted, it threatened misfortune to Bessie, his must be the privilege of sheltering her from its worst effects, and with all the fine chivalry of his nature aroused to protect and defend her who had already betrayed her preference for himself, the young artist impatiently awaited the moment in which he could fly to Bessie's side, declare his passion, and win from her the confession that it was returned.

As soon as Captain Martin had recovered sufficiently to commence his investigations, he sought out the man in whose family he knew Margaret Wilde had been received in her day of darkness and poverty.

To his intense chagrin, he found that Hinton was dead, and his family had moved. By persevering inquiry Martin learned from one of the neighbours that a young woman called Margaret Wilde had boarded with the HINTONS a short while, but she afterwards went to the cottage of the widow Sims to take care of a young child whose mother had died there.

He furthermore learned that Mrs. Sims was now bed-ridden, very deaf, and extremely cross, but he made his way to her cottage, and after a lengthy and most unsatisfactory interview with the old woman, Martin ascertained that Mrs. Wilde had given her own infant to some rich lady, but the failing memory of Mrs. Sims could not recall either her name or place of residence. At this point Martin was unwillingly compelled to forego his investigations, for an imperative summons to take command of his ship without delay was forwarded to him.

Baffled for the time, he deferred following up the clue he had gained till he returned from his voyage, which he believed would occupy but three months. He made notes of the few facts he had gathered, and among them these words were found :

"I know the James Hunter who employed Mrs. Wilde to go as nurse to Mr. Ashley's grand-daughter.

One child was given away to—I can't discover who must trace her, and come up with Hunter, if it is possible to do so."

With this resolution, Captain Martin took the command of his ship.

At the last moment he warmly shook hands with Delancey, and said :

"Good-by, lad. I've failed in what I undertook to do, but it's only for a time. I shall come back soon, and follow up the clue to as rare a piece of villainy as ever was heard of. But I won't expose the perpetrator of it, for the sake of the gratitude I owe her father, and for the friendship I felt for the man that loved her with all his true and noble heart. Ah, yes—he proved his devotion to her happiness in a way that not one in a thousand would."

"As mythical as ever, captain. I begin to despair of ever unravelling your late oracles. Do you still bid me pursue this young lady, who seems to be enveloped in a cloud of mystery even you cannot penetrate?" asked Delancey, with a smile; for by this time he had made up his mind that the eccentric captain was suffering from some hallucination of mind with regard to Bessie and her connections.

The strange hints Martin dropped, but which he pertinaciously refused to explain, gave his young friend this impression, and he sincerely wished that he had never shown him the miniature of his beloved.

To this inquiry Martin energetically replied :

"Youngster, if I believed you to be worldly-minded, lightly given to the vanities of life, I would say give up this poor girl on whom a heavy blow is preparing to fall. But you are not shallow, nor mean, nor cold of heart; therefore I say to this: if that pretty creature has shown that she likes you, take her away from the false position in which she has been placed by one who is now ready to secure it to her by forcing her, perhaps, to give her hand to the true heir of the Ashley estate. Since you've told me about the will, the cunning of that woman is plain enough to me. But I won't accuse her—no, I won't, till I am convinced, and then I promise to deal gently with her for your sake, as well as for that of the bright-haired lassie you may by that time claim as your wife."

"Good-by, old friend. If you will talk in enigmas, I cannot pretend to understand you. I hope you will have a prosperous voyage and safe return. In spite of your hints that something terrible is looming in the background of her fate, when you come back you may find that my golden-haired goddess has descended to the prosaic level of a poor artist's wife!"

"So much the better, lad—so much the better for you both if that should happen. Good-by again, and heaven bless you."

Delancey was set on shore, and went back to his boarding-house in a deep reverie. Every tender and generous impulse of his nature had been aroused by the hints of Martin.

Unlike the ordinary experience of the world, the intimation that poverty, and perhaps disgrace, might hereafter be Bessie's portion, only deepened the fervent love he cherished for her, and made him more resolute to snatch her from the evil to come.

That morning he had received a letter from Welby. The weather was still delightful, and in the hope that they could be induced to linger as long as the skies were genial, and the breezes soft, Delancey set out to join them.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

DANGERS THICKEN.

MRS. ASHLEY sat alone in her elegantly furnished sitting-room, clad in soft raiment, and surrounded by all she had once believed could afford her unalloyed happiness; but at this hour she found only bitter regret in her heart for the heavy price she had paid for the luxuries she enjoyed, unavailing penitence for yielding to temptation through her passionate and overwhelming love for her child.

The bitter fruit her sin had already borne she alone knew; the lonely struggles, the writhing consciousness that she had forfeited both happiness and self-respect to secure the position of her daughter; and yet, through her, she now felt assured that her punishment was to come.

Mrs. Ashley had endured the days of Bessie's absence with a dull sense of vacuity and desolation; it seemed to her that the sun of her life had gone out with the departure of that beloved face, and many times was she tempted to follow her and join the party, that she might watch over her darling with the Argus eyes of jealous affection.

But then the dread of her life arose before her to threaten her with detection, and she felt that she dared not venture from her seclusion. So the days lapsed away in a kind of dumb, apathetic suffering, which

she meekly bore as some expiation for her wrongdoing.

Sinner though she was, an evil soul did not dwell in Margaret Ashley, but a proud and tenacious one did; and day by day she hardened herself in the resolution to hurry on the marriage of Frank and Bessie as soon as they both returned to Ashurst, and listen to no remonstrance from either.

She would use Leon Ashley to carry out this purpose. Since he would return to England, she would secure his aid by such wiles as she knew how to practice successfully, and when completely fascinated, she would use her power as she had used it with Squire Ashley. Then, without endangering her influence over Bessie, she could compel the contumacious girl to submission through the authority of her supposed father.

Of late, Bessie's letters were unsatisfactory; they were not as frank as she wished them to be, and she restlessly feared that some infatuation for another had driven from her mind the slight preference she had cherished for Frank.

The tour of the party would extend to the middle of October; the weather was still delightful and letters had not failed to come from each place at which they stopped long enough for Bessie to write. But they were only surface letters, which did not satisfy her mother. Bessie described the scenes in which she was taking a part, gave graphic pictures of the society in which she mingled, and sketched the scenery through which she was passing with a power of language and an appreciation of the beauties of nature, that both surprised, and delighted the reader.

She was enthusiastic in her praises of the Welby family, and seemed never wearied of dilating on their kindness to her. She gave a most flattering description of young Ellery, the betrothed of Kate, but she never once referred to her own inner thoughts or feelings, or gave a clue to that which was moulding her life and fixing her future destiny.

Delancey's name was never mentioned, though she more than once referred to a talented artist who had shown her his masterly sketches. Neither did she refer to Frank, or make any comments on the contents of the letter Mrs. Ashley had forwarded to her, though that lady had several times inquired what Wentworth had written.

In all this there was no intentional deception on the part of Bessie. She regarded Frank's last communication as the final closing of the engagement which had existed between them. She understood Mrs. Ashley's wishes and feelings, and she considered it useless to fill her letters with unprofitable arguments concerning a subject which had already been discussed in all its bearings. When they met, an understanding must take place, and she reserved the final struggle for freedom till Frank was near her to sustain her through it.

In this state of anxiety the weeks wore away slowly enough to the solitary woman, and the state of her mind began to show itself in her person. She grew thin and languid, and a degree of irritation once unknown to her placid temper daily assailed her.

On this morning she was expecting letters, and she impatiently watched for the arrival of the boy who had been sent for them. At length he came in sight, leisurely walking his horse up the avenue. Mrs. Ashley threw open the half-closed blind, and waving her handkerchief to him, exclaimed :

"Come faster."

The lad could not hear her words, but he understood the impatient motion of the white canary very well, and hastened to put his steed in rapid motion.

When he dismounted on the lawn, and came toward the window with the post bag in his hand, he said :

"I've been gone a long time, I know, missis, but it wasn't my fault; the postmaster kept me."

"You always have some excuse, you provoking boy. Give me the bag, and get out of my sight."

The lad immediately obeyed, glad to escape with no further reprimand, for of late his mistress seemed to have changed her character.

Mrs. Ashley, with compressed lips and shining eyes, hastened to strew the contents of the bag upon a table. Among them she found three letters for herself.

One was from Bessie, and on this she was about to seize when her eyes fell upon the address of the second, which she saw was from Wentworth.

The third one had a slip of paper wrapped around it, on which the postmaster had written an apology for having, in some inexplicable manner, overlooked it, and left it in the box for several weeks past.

Mrs. Ashley read the excuse with a faint, sick feeling of apprehension, for she remembered the sprawling writing on the envelope but too well. She recalled the days of her childhood, when she had often guided the hand that formed those characters but had never been able to change the style of his cursive.

She passed her hand over her eyes, and convulsively muttered :

"What can John Martin have to say to me? What—what?"

She groped blindly for the seal of the letter for several moments before she succeeded in breaking it. Then pressing her fingers upon her eyelids to steady her vision, she sank upon a seat, and with extreme agitation, read the following lines:

"London, September 2, 18—.

"MARGARET.—When we met sixteen years ago in the woodland near Ashurst, I spared you then because I did not believe that you had outlived all your noble instincts, even if you had proved false to him who merited better treatment at your hands than he received.

"I should never have intruded on you again had I not discovered that in that interview you spoke falsely to me. You may think this harsh language, but I have been in the habit of calling things by their right names, and you must bear what your conduct has brought on yourself.

"On that day you assured me that the child of Frank Wilde was dead. I believed you, and went away, satisfied to leave you to such peace as you could enjoy after what you had done. You told me this falsehood at the very time that his daughter and yours was dwelling with you in the stately home of which your perfidy had made you mistress.

"I am now convinced in my own mind that Bessie Wilde has been reared as the heiress of Ashurst, while the other child, the true scion of that family, was left with strangers, who were ignorant of the name and station to which she was born."

Mrs. Ashley here clasped her hands, and sat several moments staring into vacancy, as she wildly muttered:

"What is to come next? Oh! Merciful Father, how has he discovered this?"

Her keen anxiety drove her to learn the worst, and she again lifted the paper and read on:

"Shall I tell you how I have made this discovery? By simple and most providential means. A youth I esteem met Miss Ashley in Scotland this summer. He is an artist, and he brought away with him the fair image of your daughter in his heart. He transferred it to ivory, and showed it to me.

"Do you wonder that I recognized her as the daughter of my friend when she looks at me with his eyes, smiles on me with his lips, and wears upon her brow the golden crown of hair so like that of my poor lost Frank?

"So soon as the so-called Miss Ashley's connections were named, I knew that you had done even worse than break the heart of poor Wilde, and with my knowledge of your past, I needed no proof to convince me of the crime of which you have been guilty.

"Yet, without that, I would not accuse you, Margaret.

"At the time the discovery was made I was ill in bed, or I should at once have followed it up. On my recovery, I made such efforts as were possible to do so, but I have hitherto been baffled by not being able to ascertain the person to whom the true Miss Ashley was given.

"My ship is on the eve of sailing, and I have been unable to complete my inquiries, but my cruise will not be a long one, and when I return I shall resume it with the determination to bring it to a successful issue. If it is necessary I will find Hester, the man who employed you to go to Squire Ashley's, and from him learn what I wish to know.

"You have a breathing time in which you may yourself right the wrong of which you have been guilty, to secure wealth for your own child. I am aware that a will exists binding her and young Wentworth together under a penalty of loss of fortune if they spur the shackles you would impose upon them; for to your influence I can trace such a clause as that in the will of so just a man as Squire Ashley was.

"Suffer Bessie to reside from that arrangement at once, for I am assured that she loves another. Ernest Delancey is worthy of her, and he will make her happy. Give her to him, and cleanse your soul from the hateful leprosy the love of luxury has spread over it.

"When I return, if I find that you have scorned my advice—that you are still persevering in the sinful course that you have so long followed—I warn you to beware of the consequences. I swear to you that I will come down on you as an avalanche—without mercy, and without delay.

"JOHN MARTIN."

Mrs. Ashley sank back, muttering: "Lost! lost! all lost! Oh, Bessie, cruel, ungrateful girl, what have you done? Would you tear from me the last plank that is between me and the sea of disgrace and ruin into which that madman would plunge me?"

She sat nervously fingering the envelope, scarcely

conscious of what she was doing, and for the moment her keen intellect and active mind were stunned by the sudden blow.

At length recovering herself, she sat up, threw back her hair from her brow, and muttered:

"This will never do. I must arouse myself to grapple with the difficulties that beset me, and find means to overcome them. First, I must see what Bessie has to say for herself. Deceitful and secretive as her course towards me has been, I must still guard her from the evils this dreadful man threatens to bring upon us both. The artist—yes, she referred carelessly to him to mislead me. False, false girl! how little does she dream of the precipice on the edge of which she is hovering!"

She slowly unclosed Bessie's letter, but her eyes glared on the opening words, and she made a motion as if she would crush the paper in her hands. It ran thus:

"Edinburgh, Oct. 2, 18—

"Oh, Minny, I am so happy, so foolishly elated, that I must tell you what has happened to me, though I know it will bring bitter disappointment to you.

"Console yourself, my dear friend, with the certainty that if I have chosen disinterestedly, I shall consider myself the most fortunate of women to win the love of so true and noble a man as Ernest Delancey.

"Do you remember the artist I once mentioned to you? Well, Minny dear, he is my lover; and I can never convey to you in writing what a fascinating being he is—besides being something better than that.

"We love each other, Minny; our souls respond to each other as two musical chords tuned in unison. I know that he is my fate, and if I do not marry him, I will never, never give my hand to any other.

"You need waste no sympathy on Frank, for he has found consolation for my indifference in the smiles of my sister. His letter gave me freedom to choose another, and I have done so. You must be discreet enough to keep dear Frank's secret, for my father has no idea of what is going on, and I am afraid we shall have some trouble in bringing him to consent to the exchange of sisters. But we shall do it you may be sure.

"You may think that I should tell you something more about Mr. Delancey before I close my letter. He was a college chum of Rufus Welby's, and is a young man of good family but little fortune. We first met in Scotland; he saved my life there—how I will tell you when we meet; and before we parted we both knew that we loved each other, though a revelation in words was made.

"He was suddenly called away to the sick-bed of a friend, and we did not see him again until we arrived at this place on our way to London. We shall leave to-morrow; but I feel that I must not delay an hour in assuring you that my earthly destiny, so far as marriage is concerned, is finally settled.

"Last night Mr. Delancey found an opportunity to declare his love; he told me that he is aware of the sacrifice of fortune I shall probably be called on to make if I break the ties that bind me to Frank; but with the belief that I manifested a preference for himself, he felt that I had a right to decide my own fate.

"He offered me the love of his noble heart, and a bare independence. Frank could give me wealth, but he said if he had not greatly mistaken me, he believed that I would follow the dictates of my own heart regardless of worldly influences.

"Oh, Minny, while Ernest spoke thus, if I had been base enough to cling to the sordid gold poor Frank could give me, I could never have escaped from the fascinating power of his glorious eyes, his persuasive voice, and I must have yielded the consent he asked, even if my heart had not gone entirely over to him and the cause he was so eloquently pleading.

"But I will confess to you that it had long before played the traitor to what you consider my interests and I had but one reply to give. Of course you know what that was, but you can never know the fervent truth, the perfect trust with which I pledged my heart and life to this noble, noble wosser of mine."

"Make up your mind to receive him as my future husband—to give him your spoiled darling, for Fate has written the irrevocable decree that if any man ever calls me wife, the one will be Ernest Delancey."

"A few more days and I shall be with you to tell you all, and to convince you how impossible it is that Frank and I should ever have been happy together."

"In December, Kate Welby and Mr. Ellery, of London, will be united; Mr. Delancey is to be first groomsmen, and, of course, I am to be first bridesmaid."

"If my unknown father is not the most unreasonable of men, he will permit my marriage to follow soon after. Ernest wishes as soon as possible to re-

turn to Italy, which country will probably become our future home. Of course, we expect you to accompany us, for I could not be perfectly contented if so widely severed from my dear Minny. You can leave Frank to take possession of Ashurst with his chosen one, for I am determined he shall be rewarded for the desertion of one sister by obtaining the hand of the other and far dearer one.

"Your own happy, happier, happiest "BESSIE."

The spirit of joy and love which pervaded this effusion did not move Mrs. Ashley.

She was bitter, hard and ruthless in her determination to adhere to the plan she had so long matured—had so nearly, at one time, brought to a triumphant conclusion, and she breathed through her white lips:

"Stuff! girlish sentimental nonsense! Older and wiser heads must decide on what is best for her prosperity and eventual happiness. How can the creature who has been reared in the very lap of luxury and indulgence, find even contentment in the mean and drudging life she must lead as the wife of a poor artist?" She knows nothing of the hardships she must encounter, and the glamour of passion induces her to believe that she can bear everything for the sake of him she loves. No, no, no!—Bessie shall never wed any but Frank, and with Mr. Ashley's aid I will make her his wife before that officious meddler can return. Her future safe, I can easily evade John Martin, or turn aside his evil interference with what does not concern him. Now for Frank and his mis-

"Marseilles, September 15, 18—.

"DEAR MINNY.—In a few more days we shall leave this place on a fast steamer, and very soon after this reaches you, I hope we shall be safe in England.

"I trust that we shall find Arden Place in readiness for the reception of my uncle, as I do not think you would find him an agreeable inmate at Ashurst. I am afraid that you will like neither himself nor his wife, though I know you will be attracted by the sweet charm my cousin Evelyn possesses for all who approach her nearly. She will atone in some measure for the annoyance the boy will be sure to give you.

"Oh! such an *enfant terrible* as Maitland is! I can give you no idea of him before you see him; but sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." I only hope that in the freedom of country life he will take to hunting and fishing; for he has my permission to become a veritable Orson, provided he will free his sister from his persecutions.

"Oh, Minny, I wish I only dared open my heart to you; but you would accuse me of perfidy, perhaps. It matters not. Bessie will exonerate me from blame, and prove to you that there is something in life more valuable than gold, more precious than the hoarded wealth of all the misers under the sun.

"I am writing nonsense, you think, but I am basking in the sunshine of a happiness so rare and new to me, that I believe it has half turned my head.

"My uncle is partially restored to health, and anticipates his return to his old home with immense satisfaction.

"I hope Bessie will be there by the time we arrive, for he did not seem very well pleased that she had gone on a tour of pleasure so soon after her grandfather's death. The state of her health he believed a mere excuse, for it is one of my uncle's peculiarities to think that no one can be really ill but himself. I am afraid that he is tyrannical, and poor Bessie, with her high spirit, will have a hard time with him if—

"I have not a moment more to spend in writing, so I must bid you an abrupt farewell.

"FRANK WENTWORTH."

"I can finish your last sentence for you, Mr. Frank Wentworth," muttered Mrs. Ashley, with curling lips, as she crushed his letter in her hand, and threw it from her. "If Bessie does not soon gain a protector for herself—that was what you meant to say, and what I mean to accomplish in my own way, in spite of all the opposition you may both offer. In spite of your clearly hinted passion for Evelyn Ashley—in spite of Bessie's infatuation about this young artist—I will make her your wife. I have not worked, manœuvred, planned for years to bring this marriage about, to be circumvented by two silly children, who do not seem to understand what is good for them. My sentimental pair; I shall yet have the satisfaction of seeing you brought to your sober senses, settling down into a very respectable Darby and Joan, quietly enjoying the fortune my tact has secured for you."

Mrs. Ashley spent several hours in deep reflection, then ordered her horse, and followed by her groom on a pony, she rode over to Arden Place to see if her orders had been properly carried out there.

Many painful thoughts crowded upon her mind,

and strange as it was, the most of them were given to the uncertain fate of the child she had thrown among strangers.

From the day the infant was given to Mrs. Allen, she had sedulously turned her thoughts from her, laying the flatteringunction to her soul that the little Evelyn was rich, and idolized in her new home; but the demand of Captain Martin that justice should be done to this forsaken child first awoke her to a true sense of her guilt in throwing her upon the charity of others as she had done.

She clearly saw that the one evil deed had moulded all her future life; but deeply as it might now be repented, she believed it was too late to atone.

(To be continued.)

W A T A W A .

CHAPTER XIII.

The scene that met the gaze of Lincoln and his son, on entering their cabin, will be remembered—namely, the charred and blackened body left by Scalp-Robe on the hearth, cinders of burned clothing scattered around the room, broken dishes and overturned furniture strewing the floor, and all the signs of one of the most shocking catastrophes that can possibly happen.

The smoky odour that still lingered in the apartment gave an instant effect to the horrible scene thus presented.

The cry of horror and anguish that burst from the lips of Lincoln was terrific.

His first and instant impression was what the crafty savage had desired and foreseen. He thought that the remains of Bessie were before him.

Speechless with consternation and sorrow, he sank into a grief-stricken attitude on the floor, covering his face with his hands.

Thomas was equally excited, for he at once arrived at the conclusions which so agonized his father.

"Heaven help us!" moaned the son. "Is it—can it be—Bessie?"

"There can be no doubt," responded Lincoln. "Oh! Bessie! Bessie!"

A long silence followed, broken only by the sobs of the two men.

"She is burned to death!" at length faltered Thomas, as he ventured to look upon the ruins of the dead Indian maiden.

"Yes, my son," rejoined the father. "Her clothes must have taken fire while she was getting supper. Where did you find the key?"

"On the floor, about here."

He indicated the spot.

"I see. In her fright and agony, she naturally hastened to the door, but could do no more. Her horrible sufferings must have prevented her from turning the key, and she merely drew it out of the lock and dropped it. She was getting our supper, you know. A large fire was burning. Her clothes were mostly cotton, or entirely so, and must have burned like tinder."

While uttering these words, broken by many a pause, the scout cast his tearful eyes from object to object, nervously himself to learn all that could be learned from them,

"The Indians then!" faltered Thomas.

"No! The Indians have not been here. My poor child!"

"There—there can be no doubt!" stammered the son and brother, shuddering at the shocking spectacle the body presented.

"Oh, not the slightest!"

The scout arose, lighted another torch, drew near the body and continued:

"See! It is Bessie's dress!"

He pointed at some charred fragments of the gown the savage had placed upon the body, and Thomas recognized them in an instant.

"It is hers, of course," he said. "Who else could have been here in her place? I did not mean to deny the evidence of my senses—only it is horrible! horrible!"

"See!" added Lincoln, lifting one of the blackened hands, and looking at the ring encircling one of the fingers. "The ring Bessie has worn! the ring that was your mother's!"

Not a suspicion of the real facts of the case crossed the minds of the observers. The Indian had made all too sure for a suspicion to be possible.

The dress, the ring, all pointed to the theory and explanations the two men had adopted, and at the same time forbade all others.

"Shall I carry the news to the settlement—to Jenny?" asked Thomas, after another long pause.

"No! my son, not to-night. There will be time enough for Jenny and our other friends to weep to-morrow!"

He was considerate for others, even in his sorrow.

"Lock and bar the door!" added the scout. "We must acquit ourselves of our sad duties."

Thomas obeyed the injunction, and Lincoln produced some sheets from the old-fashioned bureau in one corner of the apartment, and spread them on the floor.

With great care and tenderness he carefully enveloped the body in them, Thomas holding a torch for him, and the lifeless remains were then placed upon Bessie's bed.

"My poor child," again moaned the scout. "What agony she must have suffered! You noticed how she had dashed about the room in her fright and anguish! Fragments of her burning clothes are dropped all around us. She upset some of the things and broke some of the dishes. My poor darling! What a horrid doom!"

He took the half-consumed torch from the hand of his son, and flung it in the fireplace as if he could not bear to have the evidence of his daughter's supposed fate so clearly presented to his notice.

"The smoke still lingers," said Thomas. "The—*the accident cannot have happened a long time ago!*"

"No—perhaps not an hour! Had it not been for the savages, I might have returned in time to prevent the accident, or to have saved her."

Another long pause succeeded—a pause of agony that was beyond expression.

"Well, well; we must endure the will of heaven patiently," finally said the scout, arising. "A coffin must be prepared. I can as well make it as another. The night will pass quicker."

"I will help you," said Thomas. "I can at least hold a light for you."

He lighted a torch, and Lincoln led the way to the barn.

Several pieces of thin hewn slabs were selected from a pile, and carried to the cabin.

A box of nails, a saw, a hammer, and other tools, were produced from the cellar, and the scout proceeded to make a rude coffin, a task that lasted till midnight.

When the coffin was finished, it was carefully lined with cloth, and the remains were placed in it.

"We shall bury her during the day that is coming," said Thomas.

"Yes, my son." They placed the coffin in the little bed-room, and again seated themselves in the main apartment.

"Will you try to sleep, Thomas?" asked the scout, after another long silence.

"No, father—I cannot."

"Nor I either."

Several hours passed, broken only by an occasional remark, and still the two men watched with the dead.

At length the gleams of day commenced breaking over the scene, and they rapidly increased until daylight was fully come.

"Poor Bessie!" said Lincoln, with a deep sigh.

"How will she look by daylight?"

He proceeded to the bedroom, followed by Thomas, and they looked upon the dead.

The morning light streamed into the apartment, and brought out all the repulsiveness of the charred features.

The grief of the two men broke out afresh, and they wept several minutes.

"It is hard to bear," finally said Thomas. "She was so good. We needed her so. It is terrible!"

The scout's face was haggard, but he strove to be calm, and to call all the simple philosophy of his nature into practice.

"The ways of heaven are not our ways!" he said, in a broken voice. "We must look to heaven for consolation. We must pray for strength and patience!"

He covered the features of the dead from his sight, and returned to the other apartment.

"This book will not fail us, even in this dark hour," he said, as he took the old family Bible into his hands.

"Let us sit down together, my son, and look into its holy pages. There are many promises here that will lighten our affliction."

He seated himself, with Thomas by his side, and both fixed their attention upon the volume.

The scout noticed that several leaves had been turned down in one place, nearly the centre of the book, in such a way as to instantly attract attention, and he opened the book at that point, with a pained expression of feature, wondering who could have done it, for it was something unusual to take such a liberty with the Bible.

"Writing!" he exclaimed, with increased wonder, as his eyes fell upon the margin. "Who uses this book in this manner?"

"Not I," answered Thomas, bending nearer. "The writing is Bessie's."

"Is it?" And the scout rubbed away the tears blinding his eyes. "How strange!"

A wild cry of astonishment, relief, and intense excitement burst from Thomas as he sprang to his feet.

"Oh, look! look!" he shouted, touching the writing on the margin of the page open before them. "Read! read!"

The writing was as follows:

"Scalp-Robe is here—has brought the body of an Indian girl with him. He is putting my clothes on it. He burns it. Some horrible secret. Whatever occurs, I will be brave. Perhaps he will carry me away with him."

The exclamations of joy and relief, the cries of wonder, the ejaculations of thanksgiving with which this significant record was read by the father and son, can be imagined.

"She lives! She lives!" exclaimed Lincoln. "She has been carried off by Scalp-Robe! We have been cruelly deceived! This body is that of the dead Indian maiden. Thank heaven for its goodness! It is indeed merciful."

With hearts overflowing with joy and thankfulness, the two men knelt in the centre of the room, and the scout offered up a simple but feeling prayer of thanksgiving.

"She lives—my poor child is alive!" he repeated, as he arose to his feet. "I see it all, now. There has been some sickness among the Indians lately, and I know that one of the young squaws was dangerously ill. The crafty savage has availed himself of her death to arrange this horrible plot. See here!"

He took up the platter upon which Bessie had put the venison steak she broiled for supper—the one the savage had eaten.

"Do you think Bessie would have eaten her supper without us?" he continued, with a return of his shrewd smile to his face. "No! She would have waited till this time for her supper."

"That's indeed true," answered Thomas. "Had we not been so excited, we would have seen this before. It shows that the savage helped himself to a good supper before leaving."

"That's clear. He must have been here soon after your departure, or he would not have had time for all these proceedings. I think he must have been on the island when Bessie went out to meet you, and so hid himself in the cabin at the moment of your departure."

Thomas assented.

"Be that as it may," continued Lincoln, "his whole plot is discovered. He thought we would bury the Indian girl as Bessie, and never know your sister's captivity. Bring up some steaks from the cellar, Thomas, and put them into my game-bag, with some bread. He keeps himself near the cataract, lately, and I will at once go in pursuit of him. Look up the house behind us, and go down to the settlement as quickly as possible. See if Robert Hale has arrived safely, and report all that has happened."

"Shall we not come, a party of us, to assist you in the search?" asked Thomas, as he proceeded toward the cellar.

"No, not till you hear from me; and the crafty villain may be off his guard, thinking that we have fallen into his trap, and that no search will be made for Bessie. Keep on the look-out, everybody, but leave this matter to me for the present."

The scout looked to his weapons while Thomas put up his provisions, and the two then left the cabin, locking the door behind them.

"If the villain has gone to the cataract," said Lincoln, "he probably left from the upper end of the island. Let's see if we can get a trace of him!"

They went to the spot indicated, and made a careful search. They found broken twigs, foot-prints, and even the place where the savage had pushed off his canoe.

"Enough!" said Lincoln, in a voice that trembled with joyful eagerness. "He has been here! I shall know how to track him! Await me at the settlement, and look out for yourself on the way there!"

They pushed off in separate canoes, the scout ascending the river, and Thomas going toward the settlement.

CHAPTER XIV.

LINCOLN pursued his way up the river, keeping at one side in the shade of the trees that bordered it, as a precaution against being seen by any prowling Indian, and rowing as steadily and noiselessly as possible.

The knowledge that Bessie still lived, and that he was possibly upon the trail of her abductor, filled his heart with joy and thanksgiving; but that joy did not cause him to relax, in the least, his habitual wariness. On the contrary, his vigilance was redoubled, and not a thicket, not a rock, not a bush upon his route, escaped his rapid but careful inspection.

In due course of time the roar of the cataract fell upon his hearing, and he realized that an obstacle

would soon be presented in his ascent toward the hills. Knowing that if Scalp-Robe had retreated in this direction, he must have landed and carried his boat above the falls, the scout rowed as near the shore as he could, and looked anxiously for footprints.

His search was soon rewarded.

Not only did he discover the marks of a large pair of moccasined feet indenting the earth, as if their owner had been burdened, but he also detected a smaller pair of footprints, which he instantly knew to be Bessie's.

The next moment his wandering gaze detected, half hidden amid the foliage of a bush, a tiny white strip, one of those his daughter had placed on her route to signs.

With a cry of joy, he sprang forward, caught it from the detaining thorns, and hastily examined it.

"It is a strip of Bessie's handkerchief," he exclaimed. "It has her initials worked in the corner. The brave girl! She's a chip of the old block! She didn't cry or despair, but retained presence of mind enough to leave these little traces as guides to me.

His kindly face beamed with fatherly pride in his brave daughter, and his manly lips quivered with sudden emotion.

Hiding the strip of handkerchief in his pocket, and dashing a tear from his eye, the scout proceeded to shoulder his long canoe and follow the trail he had discovered. His burden was by no means light, but he possessed a sturdy, iron-like frame, and he bore the canoe as easily as though it had been mad of bark.

He made precisely the same detour as Scalp-Robe had done, and came upon several more of Bessie's signals, finally returning to the river at the same point above the falls as the savage had done before him.

He then resumed his seat in his canoe and rowed rapidly onward.

"I may be mistaken," he thought, "but it's my opinion that the savage has carried Bessie into the limestone cave up here. It's always been a kind of haunt of the Indians, and there are hiding-places in it, I dare say, known only to themselves. I shall soon see."

He did not once relax his energies rowing until he had approached within a short distance of the cave, and then his manner became more cautious and vigilant.

He moved along more slowly, and the dip of his oars became, if possible, more gentle and noiseless.

Near the mouth of the cave he detected another signal of Bessie's.

Satisfied that no savage eye was upon him, he rowed into the cave.

His eyes soon became accustomed to the dim light, and he could see that he was alone in that grim solitude, unless he excepted the birds who made their home near the mouth of the cave.

Continuing to ascend the subterranean river, he soon passed beyond the portion of the cabin illuminated by the aperture by which he had entered, and found himself in a region of intense darkness.

"Unless there is some inner cave that is unknown to me," he thought, at this juncture, "Bessie is not hidden in this cavern. There must be one, known only to the red-skins. I know she's here, or that bit of handkerchief wouldn't have been just at the entrance. I must watch and wait."

Rowing into a little niche made by a bend in the stream, the scout rested on his oars and prepared to wait.

The more he thought upon the subject, the more certain he became that Bessie was concealed within the cave.

The facts that the spot was known to be a favourite haunt of Scalp-Robe, and that he had just found one of Bessie's signals at the entrance, went far towards confirming his opinion.

He had often, in the course of his scouting expeditions, explored the limestone cave, as the settlers called it, and he knew of no part of it where Bessie could possibly be confined against her will.

The arcades and chambers were all sufficiently open to admit of ingress and egress, and a prisoner in one of them could not fail to find a way of escape or hope of discovery from a white hunter or scout.

Having reduced himself into a belief of the existence of a secret cavern, Lincoln was strongly tempted to shout the name of his daughter, in the hope of hearing her reply, but he was too cautious to act upon such an impulse.

Scalp-Robe might be with her at that moment, or might arrive before the echo could die out in the rocky chamber, and so leave the place of her captivity unrevealed.

Although his heart yearned over his imprisoned daughter, and he longed to comfort her in her griefs, and although he had many anxieties as to her safety at that moment, Lincoln lost nothing of his patient endurance nor the quiet fortitude that formed one of his chief characteristics.

Sitting there in the dense gloom, with his gaze

fixed upon the light that gleamed through the entrance in the distance, he looked like a statue carved from stone, so silent and immovable was he.

The minutes lengthened into hours, and not a sign of impatience escaped him, not an ejaculation passed his lips.

At length the grim, unnatural silence that reigned in the cavern was broken by the muffled dip of oars, and the aperture was darkened by the entrance of a white canoe, which shot swiftly into the cavern.

It was occupied by Scalp-Robe himself.

Lincoln recognized him in a moment as the light near the entrance revealed the upright feathers that adorned his head, his sinister visage, and the terrible robe that was gathered around him.

The savage rowed up the stream, pausing once or twice to listen and look about him, but he failed to detect the presence of the scout, who was as wary as himself.

When he had gained the dense shadow, and was within a few feet of Lincoln, he landed, drew his canoe upon the rocky floor, secreting it, and after another minute's listening, glided stealthily away into the darkness, seeming to disappear in a solid wall of rock.

Lincoln waited until assured that the Indian would not immediately return, and then landed, drew his boat out of the water, and crept softly in the direction taken by Scalp-Robe.

This course brought him directly in front of a jagged face of rock that seemed to form the end to the cavern.

As he paused, examining it, he heard the sound of voices, and he immediately recognized them as Bessie's and her captor's. His joy and relief can be imagined.

"The White Fawn looks not kindly upon the great chief," he heard the Indian saying. "Her eyes are cold, and her looks are like the winter. The Son of the Cataract stayed with his people while the darkness was heavy, and when the sun beamed he counselled with the great braves of the tribe. And now he has come to his pale-face squaw, and she smiles not on him."

"The pale-face girl will never smile upon the Son of the Cataract," replied Bessie. "She loves him not. She will not be his squaw."

There was something of impatience in the Indian's tone as he responded:

"Say not so, daughter of the pale-faces. The trap holds the White Fawn, and she cannot escape. She hates not the great chief—the terror of his enemies, the beloved of the Great Spirit. She has eaten of the maize he has given her, she has cooked the venison he left her, and she has slept upon his bed of skins. She must love him."

"That don't follow, Son of the Cataract," said Bessie, with a trace of her father's humour, even in that moment. "I have slept and eaten because I needed rest and food, not because I loved you."

"The voice of the White Fawn is like the singing water," returned the savage, in unmoved tones, "but her words are not wise. She is the squaw of Watawa, the Great Eagle, the Son of the Cataract, bravest in war, wisest in the councils of his tribe. Her sons shall be chiefs. Her daughters shall wed with chiefs. She shall sit in the lodge of Watawa, and slaves shall do her bidding. I have spoken!"

"It's about my time to speak," thought Lincoln, anxiously. "He is getting in earnest!"

Knowing that there must be an opening in the rock somewhere near him, he made a closer search, and soon discovered the block of stone which served as a door, and which stood a little ajar. Pushing it away very gently, he glided into the narrow passage, and approached the inner chamber, soon gaining a complete view of it.

Its singular beauty was unnoticed by him, his gaze resting upon his daughter, who sat upon a pile of skins in front of the fire, whose ruddy light played over her features and dress.

She looked pale and tired, but her father noticed that her face wore a brave and resolute expression, as if she were determined to yield her life sooner than become the wife of her Indian suitor.

Scalp-Robe stood before her, his visage wearing a menacing look, evidently provoked by her reply to his last remark; a reply which the scout had necessarily lost.

"If the White Fawn loves not Watawa, she shall fear him," said the savage, significantly. "Her scalp shall not hang from the coat of the Great Eagle, for she shall live to be the squaw of Watawa. If she loves him not, she shall fear him as the deer fears the hunter. She shall be his slave and grind his corn for him. The other squaws of Watawa shall watch her and mock her, while she works in her lodge for them."

While the savage was uttering these words with pompous wrath, the eyes of Bessie kindled with a look of defiance.

"Let the Son of the Cataract look to himself!" she commanded, in tones of haughty scorn. "I have secured some of his weapons in his absence, and I know how to use them! Let him beware!"

A stout hunting-knife flashed in the light, held firmly in the maiden's right hand.

The chief was as enraged as surprised at this demonstration.

His eyes blazed with sullen and malicious wrath, as he exclaimed:

"The White Fawn shall know what it is to offend the Great Eagle! She shall not only be his squaw, and the slave of his slaves! Her hair shall be cut off! Her clothes shall be rags! And she shall sleep on the scalps of her people!"

"I reckon not, you red rascal!" said a stern voice behind him, and Lincoln leaped like a panther upon the back of the savage.

(To be continued.)

THE OLD RED RAG.

THE statistics of European wars show us that the French, who are clad in blue, suffered a greater loss in proportion than the British, who wore red, when under fire.

An old Peninsular officer, whose letter is before us, mentions:

"When our light company, and the company of the 60th Rifles (green), attached to our brigade, were skirmishing on the same ground (against the enemy), the latter lost more men than we did, although chiefly composed of Germans, who are proverbially cautious skirmishers. This is an important subject.

"I saw, at the battle of Vittoria, the wonderful effect of the imposing appearance of the British line on the enemy. After they had been driven from their position and completely scattered, many glorious attempts were made by their officers to rally them on some heights behind the ridge on which our line was advancing. It became an object with the officer commanding the light companies, which were scattered in pursuit, to get them arrayed for the attack of a column which formed on one of those heights at some distance in our front, and thus became a rallying point to the thousands who were flying from the ridge in helpless confusion. Before we had a sufficient number of the pursuers collected to attack this formidable column, it broke and bolted, its soldiers disappearing among the racing mobs, who threw away their arms and fled towards the Pyrenees.

"While wondering what had caused so sudden a panic among men who but a moment before seemed ready to adhere until death to their officers, we—the skirmishers—looked back to the ridge, and saw a sight which I shall never forget. The whole British line crowned the mountains, from wing to wing, looking like a wall of fire, their bayonets glittering in the sun, as they moved steadily, silently, and presenting a glorious picture of power and order. This sight it was which struck the enemy to the heart, and made him fly from his new position in sudden panic. No army, although double the number, if clad in sombre uniform, could ever make such an appearance or produce such an effect as this."

We have had the pleasure of knowing more than one brave veteran officer who treasured affectionately the "old red rag" in which he had followed Picton, Graham, or the Iron Duke, and in which he had been wounded on the glorious fields of Spain or in the crowning victory of Waterloo; and in every age there has been some eccentric enthusiast who stuck manfully to fashions that had departed.

THE ENGLISH FARM SERVANT OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.—LET ME ATTEMPT TO RECKON THE ACTUAL VALUE OF A WELL-PAID FARM-SERVANT'S WAGES, WITH THOSE OF HIS FAMILY, IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

He received, in kind, say 6*lb* qrs. of wheat the year. The average value of wheat during the fourteenth century was 5*s.* 10*d.* This payment amounts, then, to about 38*s.* 8*d.* His money wages were, say 6*s.* 8*d.* His allowances during the harvest months were not less than 5*s.* If his wife worked for 120 days in the year at 1*d.* a day, it would add another 10*s.*; and if his boy were also engaged at 1*d.* per day (and these were the customary wages of women and boys), it would add 5*s.* more. If we multiply this aggregate, that is £3 2*s.* 4*d.*, by twelve, the wages of a hired farm servant conjointly with those of two members of his family, would have amounted in modern money to £39 4*s.*—that is, to nearly 15*s.* a week—a rate far higher than the average wages of the modern agricultural labourer. And we must not forget that this calculation does not include his commutable rights, and that he held his cottage and curtilage at a rent of about 3*s.* a-year—that is, again, in modern money, at about 9*d.* a-week. Nor does it seem that the labourer ran any risk of not finding employment. Wherever peasant proprietorship is the

role of tenancies, the wages of labour are comparatively high, because hired labourers are scarce. This is known to be the case in France and Lombardy. In our own country, the highest rate prevails in Cumberland, where the small proprietor, called the statesman, is not yet extinct. And though there are many conveniences which modern commerce and manufactures have supplied to the English peasant, it cannot, I fear, be doubted that, estimated by the money value of his wages, his condition is far inferior in the command over the necessities of life to that of his ancestor in the fourteenth century.

A DAUGHTER TO MARRY.

By the Author of "Butler Burke at Eton," &c.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In vain, by restless conscience driven,
Lerd William left his home,
Far from the scenes that saw his guilt,
In pilgrimage to roam.

To other climes the pilgrim fled,
But could not fly despair;
He sought his home again—but peace
Was still a stranger there. —
Southey.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Sandford Saville had contrived to procure the committal for trial of Francis Barclay, he was not able to congratulate himself upon his achievement. His character was totally different from that of his wife. He was a well-meaning man, though weak, and he would have been an honest, industrious member of society, had not his evil genius, in the shape of the woman whom he had married, been ever by his side urging him to the commission of offences which were really foreign to his nature.

Mr. Saville was, in the truest sense of the word, a weak-minded man.

When he thought of the almost inconceivable misery he had brought upon Francis Barclay, when he allowed his mind to dwell upon, and his vivid imagination to picture the awful fate that would be the portion of the young man in a convict station in a foreign land—the chains, the horrid companionship, the meagre food, the absence of intellectual or even friendly communion, the hard labour, the life without hope, the death in life, the yearning—the terrible yearning—for the society of his wife and those friends who were endeared to him in a thousand ways of long association—he shuddered at the guilt with which he was loading his soul—that soul which he wished to be immaculate, but which he had not the strength to keep free from pollution.

His wife watched him narrowly.

She knew better than anyone the weak points of his character, and she better than others knew how to take advantage of them. In some cases Mr. Sandford Saville was adamant. A capital man of business was Mr. Saville; no one could cheat him of a halfpenny. He was as good an accountant as any in the city, and could detect a flaw, if there was one, in a bill a yard long, supposing that it were necessary for him to do so. Mrs. Saville was afraid that a reaction would set in, and that her husband would regret what he had done; and she thought it her imperative duty to watch him narrowly, so that she might, if occasion arose, re-inspire him, as Lady Macbeth did the Thane of Cawdor when his courage failed him. The words:

My hands are of your colour, but I shame
To wear a heart so white.

were applicable to Mrs. Saville and her husband.

Mr. Saville was not, strictly speaking, a religious man. He went to church on Sunday because his wife made him do so, and he considered it a guarantee of respectability; but he did not ponder sacred words in his heart, so that they might bring forth fruit in due season. He did not number himself in the ranks of the latitudinarians and free-thinkers of the day, but he shirked the matter. He shuffled with his conscience, and put off serious consideration, saying to himself, "There is plenty of time."

In most things he was a time-server.

An occurrence happened soon after Francis Barclay's committal for trial which he looked upon as a signal mark of retribution and divine anger. His son, Michael Saville, was arrested by the police together with Diphthong and Amen Corner, for perpetrating a swindle.

It appeared that they had endeavoured to start a company, but had failed in the effort. Nothing daunted and determined, as before, to make money in an irregular way, they opened a registration office for servants, and were so clumsy as to victimise a couple of housemaids and a groom, who had some money to invest. The police were informed of the nefarious transactions of the unworthy trio, and at once proceeded to pay them an amount of delicate attention, which resulted in their making acquaintance with the interior of a police cell.

The affair did not make much sensation, for the three confederates had the good sense to plead guilty, and were sent to the House of Correction at Wandsworth for six months. This establishment is known as the New Model Prison. In it the prisoners wear masks, and the silent system is vigorously enforced. It is to be presumed that Michael Saville did not like the employment of oakum-picking, to which he was subjected, but he had to submit to the discipline of the gaol nevertheless.

Mr. Saville knew nothing about this disastrous occurrence until he saw it in the newspapers, and he was much distressed at the intelligence. One or two enquiries respecting the similarity of name were made of him in the city, but he denied his son, denied the existing relationship and all knowledge of the malefactor, saying: "A mere accident my dearsir, nothing more; a mere accident of nomenclature, I do assure you. No relative whatever. A scamp, evidently a scamp!"

Yet he was sorry for his son; he could have wished him a better fate. Mrs. Saville was furious at the occurrence, but she had not a word of sympathy for Michael. It seemed extremely unnatural to hear her denounce him and say that he deserved his fate, and that it served him very well right.

"This is very bad news. This is indeed a great blow to me!" exclaimed Mr. Saville at breakfast, when the paper made him acquainted with the overwhelming intelligence. "I had hoped to be able to reclaim the boy! It was my idea that if I allowed him to sow his wild oats, he would settle down and become a respectable member of society."

"Poor boy!" repeated Mrs. Saville, "what nonsense you talk! I am very glad to think that he has met with his deserts at last."

"But the disgrace, my dear," mildly remarked Mr. Saville.

"It does not affect us, for very few who are acquainted with us know that the Michael Saville of the police reports is our son."

"When I look back upon recent events," replied Mr. Saville, with a dismal groan, "I can't for the life of me see the difference between Michael and myself. If anything, I am the greater scoundrel of the two."

Mrs. Saville's face clouded as she heard this self-accusatory remark. Rising from her chair, she walked to the door, and opened it to see if there was a listener outside.

The passage was clear, the landing was unoccupied, and no footfall was heard on the stairs.

Having ascertained this to be the fact, she shut the door and returned to her seat at the breakfast-table. Felicia had finished her breakfast and withdrawn to the morning-room, where she was practising some new and rather noisy operatic music.

"It must be a species of insanity that impels you to speak like that!" she exclaimed, in a low voice, which quivered with suppressed fury. "No child of average intellect and intelligence would think of being so foolish as to utter remarks which might betray him, and allow others to participate in the keeping of a dangerous secret."

"I simply spoke the truth," murmured the bank manager, apologetically.

"Then learn, once for all, that to speak the truth is a crime, for it may deliver you into the hands of justice; and then what is to become of your wife and family? Never let me hear another word of such trash. The difference between you and Michael is that you are clever and successful, and do things on a gigantic and colossal scale."

With these words on her lips, the lady rose and swept from the room. It was early, and Mr. Saville did not care about arriving at the bank until eleven o'clock. His brougham was standing at the door. It always was there at a quarter to ten, and the well-bred full-blooded horses impatiently pawed the ground, as if anxious to make a start. The coachman sat immovable upon the box, gazing steadfastly before him, but his thoughts were far away. He was perchance thinking of the coming contest for the blue ribbon of the turf, and wondering whether the five-shilling piece he put on "the field" would bring him in a hundred-fold, as he most ardently hoped it might.

Whenever Sandford Saville was more than usually depressed, he found some consolation in his daughter's society. She was so good and innocent, and he thought so profoundly religious, that he derived a melancholy sort of satisfaction in thinking that his household was not altogether ungodly.

When his wife left him, he got up and went downstairs to speak a few words to Felicia, before he went into the city and commenced his daily work. She had finished playing the piano, and as well as he could distinguish through the closed door, she was reading aloud. What? He listened intently. Was it the sacred utterances of holy writ. It could be nothing else. Those long forgotten, but now well remembered, touching, burning words, speaking eloquently of the

long hereafter and the awful punishment awaiting the persistent and incorrigible evil doer.

For some minutes the man stood there entranced, with rapt attention to the ministrations of his daughter, who was all unconscious of the good she was doing.

It was her simple and unaffected practice to read some portion of the Scriptures aloud during the morning, and she was merely pursuing her usual and established custom.

While the bank manager listened, he became changed. His face was for a time the index of his mind, and it was transfigured; his eyes flashed, and as they scintillated, seemed eloquent of repentance. He did not intrude upon his daughter, his heart was too full; he remained at the door of the room, an eavesdropper, until she had finished her self-imposed task and closed the book. Then he stole softly to his study, and throwing himself into an arm chair, indulged in a reverie.

He frequently talked aloud when pre-occupied, and on this occasion he did so. So engrossed was he with his own thoughts, that he did not remark his wife's entrance into his study. She had marked him as he stood at the door of the morning-room without entering, and she had watched him into his study. She followed him with a stealthy, cat-like tread, and stood with her arms folded, and her regards fixed upon the down-turned face of the man who felt, oh! so wretched, that he could have gone forth and taken away that life which he had once blessed God for giving him.

There was no blessing God now, no rejoicing, no glad exaltation and joyousness of heart. He was crushed to the ground, brought level with despair and face to face with an accusing conscience, whose load of guilt would not be stifled.

In the agony of his remorse, he exclaimed, in a spasmodic manner:

"I am fully alive now to the enormity of which I have been guilty. Not content with robbing the unsuspecting depositors of the bank, I have allowed an innocent man to be dragged to prison. I have ruined him for ever, and blighted what was a promising career. What punishment do I not deserve for such pusillanimous conduct—for such arrant cowardice? Thank heaven, it is not now too late to do justice to a persecuted individual! I will intervene at the last moment, and if the jury by which he will be tried do not acquit him, I will step forward and openly avow that I am the actual culprit, and that Justice is blind and undiscriminating."

"Sandford!" exclaimed Mrs. Saville, in a harsh, metallic voice.

He started.

"I have been—a—been—dreaming, I think," he muttered, as his eye quailed before the steady glace of his wife.

"So I should think. You did not hear me enter. I came to remind you that the brougham is waiting, and it is time you were in the city, attending to your bank business."

"Yes, you are right. I feel strangely out of sorts this morning. I wonder what is the matter with me? I hope I am not going to be ill."

He got up, put on his hat and coat, and walked with a faltering step across the hall, saying to himself:

"I wonder if she overheard me? I think not. I am sure I sincerely hope not. I do not think she did, or she would have said something."

He stepped into the brougham, and was driven off. When Mrs. Saville was by herself she mentally exclaimed:

"He must be watched. The man is dangerous, and may spoil all. I must employ stratagem here, and get him away from the scene of action for a time. It is not safe to have him in London until the trial is over. His mind is too highly wrought. I must give my best attention to this matter."

CHAPTER XIX.

He disappeared—draw nearer, child—
He died; no one knew how;

The murdered body no'er was found—

The tale is hushed up now.

But there was one who rightly guessed

The hand that struck the blow. H. G. Bell.

It was a raw cold evening. The air was damp from the effects of recent rain, the sky was dull and leaden. What wind there was, commended itself to the attention of the public more by its roughness than its pliancy, more by its freezing chilliness than its zephyr softness.

Luke Fentiman was leaning against a lamp-post, his head hanging down, his eyes bleared, his lips parched, his skin dirty, his hair matted together, as if uncombed for some time.

The fact was, that the worthless fellow had, on leaving Mala, picked a gentleman's pocket of a purse containing two sovereigns and some silver. In order to celebrate the event congenially, he went to a flesh

public-house, to the landlord of which he was well known, and there he continued until he had spent every halfpenny of the money of which he had possessed himself in a dishonest manner. As long as the money lasted the landlord was civil enough, and allowed Fentyman to be uproarious and conduct himself very much as he pleased; but when the last stiver was spent he resented his drunken insolence, and ejected him with an energy more forcible than pleasant.

For three days Luke Fentyman had paid his court to Bacchus. He had forgotten all about Mula; but when he found himself in the street, with his head reeling and his pulse throbbing at the rate of a hundred a minute, he thought of the poor dumb girl whom he had left shut up in the cellar in the house of which she was the nominal mistress, if it did not belong to her in fact and law.

He had come to Whitechapel to spend his ill-gotten money, so it will be seen that he was some distance from the Pantiles.

Unless he obtained something to steady his nerves, it was clear to his muddled comprehension that he could not walk a step.

His head swam and seemed to turn round and round with a velocity that was quite alarming. He felt inclined to slide quietly into the gutter and end his troubles in that delectable locality by going off to sleep.

This course of procedure was prevented solely by his dread of the police, who would recognize him as an old offender, and probably provide for him, at the expense of the nation, for seven days, or a longer or shorter period, as the case might be.

While he was in a state of irresolution almost amounting to despair, a little ragged urchin came up, and looking curiously at Luke, stopped short, took a more critical survey, and then burst into a loud guffaw.

This little fellow was much younger than he looked, he had such an old face when compared with his general appearance. This antiquated look is a well known and an oft described characteristic of the very poor of London. The boy was not more than twelve years of age, and the superficial observer would not have believed him a day less than twenty. Occasionally his eye twinkled and the rigid muscles of his mouth relaxed, showing that although wretchedly poor, and living from hand to mouth, he yet had a keen sense of humour which poverty with its iron heel had not succeeded in crushing out of him.

The lad's face was very comic to look at. It was decidedly ugly, and more like that of an ape than anything else; but a good-humoured expression, like that which is supposed to pervade the painted countenance of a clown, was always apparent.

He was known amongst his associates, and the really fraternity of Whitechapel generally, as Monkey Marvel.

He had never known the luxury of a father or a patronymic; he had always been a waif and a stray on life's ocean. His nick-name had been given him owing to his having appeared at a penny show as the Whitechapel Marvel or the Infant Phenomenon. His theatrical career was unfortunately brought to a close owing to the bankruptcy of the proprietor of the penny place of entertainment.

After that he wandered about the streets, picking up a few halfpence by turning somersaults by the side of omnibuses, to the eminent risk and danger of his limbs; and he did odd jobs occasionally, such as holding horses, running errands, and occasionally even sweeping crossings.

It is sad to relate that his moral sense was perverted, and that he did not recognize the distinction between *mum* and *tum* as he ought to have done. Butchers and cheesemongers often missed small articles exposed for sale, for the loss of which Monkey Marvel was answerable. Altogether, he was a fair specimen of what, in modern phraseology, is denominated the City Arab.

It was not the fault of society that he was what he was, so much as the natural tendency implanted in his breast for a vagrant life. He had been sent by a magistrate with philanthropic ideas to a reformatory; but, after being there for six months, and being initiated in the tailors' handicraft, he took advantage of the first opportunity and ran away.

"How long are you going to stand there, my man?" exclaimed Monkey Marvel, mimicking the voice of a man with a grave intonation.

"As long as it suits me," replied Luke Fentyman, who was slightly husky through the united effects of drink and exposure. "And who may you be, that takes it upon yourself to give me orders?"

"Why, an old friend, Luke; sorry to see that you have had more than you can carry."

Luke opened his eyes as well as their puffed condition would permit him, and by the light of the gas-lamp against which he was leaning, recognized in the elfin mortal before him a young rogue with whom he had often come in contact.

"It strikes me, youngster," he said, "that you and I've met before. Now, if you'll take me somewhere so as I can get sober, I'll be the making of you."

"That'll just suit me. I've been looking a long time for my fortune without finding it, and it'll be all the more acceptable when it does come."

"I'll do it, then, if you'll stand my friend on this occasion. You needn't laugh. I'm all in earnest. I've got a sure card, and the event's bound to come off. Do you think you can give me a shake down hard by?—a truss of straw will do. I don't care where it is, as long as it ain't a police-station."

"Have you got any coin?" enquired Monkey Marvel, with a shrewd look.

"Not a halfpenny. Look here, it's this way. I had a tidy sum when I went into the Three Fishes. Well, as long as the money lasted the landlord was civil; but when it was all gone, old Tubbe turned me out, knowing I'd no power to help myself. Now that's what I call unhandsome, but I'll be square with him one of these days. I've got it in for him, and it won't lose by keeping."

It is to be presumed that by "it," the drunken man alluded to his revenge, but as his faculties were obscured by drink, not much reliance is to be placed upon language which was consequently obscure.

Monkey Marvel was able to accommodate Luke Fentyman in the way he desired. He had of late been very obliging to the proprietor of a cab yard. In return for his services the proprietor permitted him to sleep in a stable where there was a little loose straw. This was a great favour, and regarded as an invaluable concession by the recipient of it, as it saved him the expense of a lodging.

To the stable yard Monkey Marvel took Fentyman, and shook him up a couple of handfuls of straw, upon which he was soon lying with his mouth open, and snoring with a loudness which was extremely unpleasant to those who heard it.

The next morning Luke awoke with a racking headache; his mind and body both enfeebled with his excesses, his mouth parched so that his tongue clove to the roof of it, his eyes hot and aching, his palms fevered, his skin dry; in a word, his entire frame disorganized.

Monkey Marvel conducted him to the pump in the yard, and pumped a refreshing stream upon him; afterwards providing him with a dram of brandy to restore his wasted energies, in accordance with the time honoured maxim,

Bending forward, Luke said in a voice a little above a whisper:

"My lad?"
To which query Monkey Marvel, in the same tone, replied:

"Guv'nor!"
"Can you keep your tongue still?"
"Yes."
"And your mouth shut?"
"I hope so."

"I'd be the making of you if I thought I could trust you," added Luke reflectively.

"They might cut me in pieces afore I'd 'oller," said Monkey Marvel, going on enthusiastically to explain. "Oh, my, wouldn't I like to be put in the thumbscrews just to show the world that that ain't in me, but agin my natur to split on a pal what is a pal, and no shams. Why, they might burn me in Smithfield, and cut off my head on Tower Hill, I wouldn't so much as squeak, no not so loud as a mouse in a trap."

"I've always found you as sound as a roach," replied Luke Fentyman, "and I'm one of those chaps who always speak as they find. I told you last night I'd got a sure card, and it is so, and no mistake; but I want a bottle holder. I want some 'un as will stand by me through life, and as I'm a fighting my way through the world I'll back me up and slap me on the back and say, 'Go it, Luke, that's your sort, Luke, you're safe to win; you're a going the right road, now's your time, Luke; get the steam up and mind you don't bust the biler!'" That's what I wants, and if I thought as how you'd jine hands with me, and be hand and glove, I'd strike a bargain."

Stopping for a moment and fixing his eyes full on the lad, he supplemented his remarks by adding:

"What do you say?"
"Why just this 'ere, Luke—I'm with you," replied Monkey Marvel.

"You is, Monkey?"
"Yes."
"You aint got nothing on hand?"

"No."
"No pals as will interfere?"

"Not one."
"Then you're the chap for my money. Now it's this way. You keep your ears open and listen well, 'cos I don't like to be interrupted and to have to say over twice what I've got to say. There's a party—is yer a listin'?"

"I is, Luke."

"All right. Now it's this way. There's a party as I've got my peepers on, and it's a heye that don't shut longer than it's got any bis'n' to. Well, this ere party as I'm a speaking of has got a secret. I know it's a secret 'cos o' lots o' things which it isn't necessary for me to tell you now; are you a listening?"

"In course I is. What do you want to go on asking that for?" exclaimed Monkey Marvel. "Any-one ud think that I was silly."

"Stash it! I didn't mean nothin'," replied Luke, in a tone calculated to re-assure his listener and allay his irritation. "You're young, but it don't matter, you'll be old enough some day, please you live. But it's this way. Well, this secret is known to a gal, and she's dumb—"

"Dumb!"

"Yes. She can hear fast enough, but she can't speak. If she can't speak, she can write on a slate when she is made to. T'other day she was obstinate, and I shoved her into a cupboard o' coals, all amongst the nubbly ones, and there she lies. I picked a gen'l'm's pocket, and went to the Three Fishes with the money, and I've been there for close upon three days and four nights."

"Perhaps she's dead," suggested Monkey Marvel, opening his mouth with wonder at the tale of which he was the auditor.

"That's what I'm beginnin' to get powerful frit about. I'm thinkin' we'd better make tracks at once for the Pantiles, where she is shut up."

"Pantiles! That's up Old Drury way, ain't it?"
"Not far off. If you're ready, we'll make a move!"

Monkey Marvel jumped up, and putting himself by Luke Fentyman's side, prepared to leave the shop. They knew their way about town very well, and took the shortest cut from the city to the West End.

It was still early morning when they reached the Pantiles. There were few people about. St. Paul's had just struck seven. Milkmen and first postmen were the prominent figures on the pavement.

Luke was provided with the latch key which he had taken from Mula, and he let himself in. He was quickly followed by Monkey Marvel. They descended the stairs. In the lower regions the silence of the grave prevailed.

Luke Fentyman felt his courage give way as he approached the cellar in which he had placed Mula. What if he had left her for too long a time? What if she were dead?

That would be a great and irreparable misfortune. Mula was the only key to the mystery which he was longing most ardently to solve and penetrate.

If he had been unfortunate enough through his want of sobriety to have allowed her to breathe her last in that dismal cupboard then he would be forced to abandon all hope and give up the idea of making large sums of money out of the nervous fear and timidity of one whom he supposed to be a rich man, and one able to pay well for silence and secrecy.

He knocked at the cupboard door and received no answer.

He put his ear to the key-hole and listened, but without hearing the slightest sound which induced him to think that Mula still lived.

Taking the key from his pocket, he handed it to Monkey Marvel, saying:

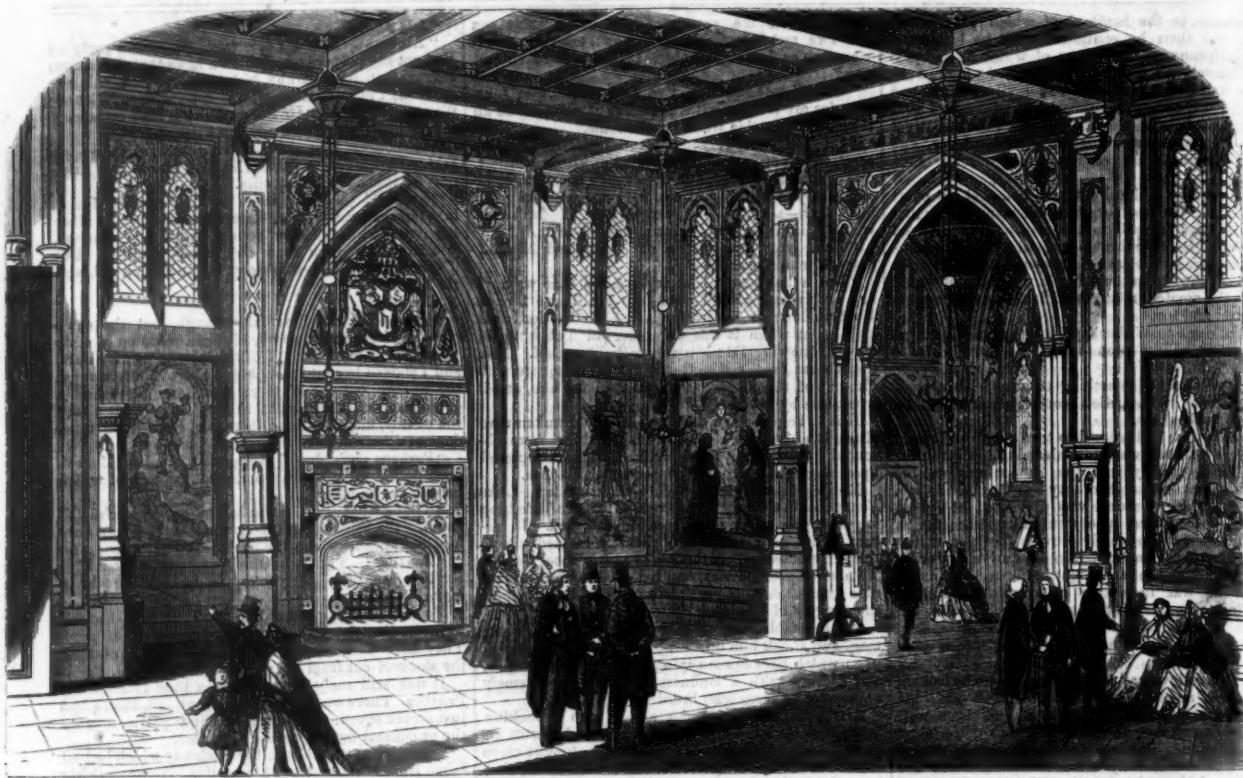
"Do you open the door, for I'll be hanged if I have the pluck to do it."

His coward heart failed him, and sitting down on a chair in the kitchen, he watched the boy's movements with an anxiety he was far from feeling on ordinary occasions.

His colour went and came, for he could not eradicate from his mind an impression that he was baffled.

(To be continued.)

THE following are the Lent preachers appointed to preach at Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace, 1866:—February 14th, Ash Wednesday, Dean of Her Majesty's Chapels Royal, Lord Bishop of London; 16th, Friday, Rev. Dr. Goulburn; 18th, Sunday, Lord Archbishop of Armagh; 21st, Wednesday, Rev. C. A. Morgan; 23rd, Friday, Rev. Dr. Temple; 25th, Sunday, Lord Bishop of Carlisle; 28th, Wednesday, Rev. H. M. Birch; March 2nd, Friday, Rev. W. Rogers; 4th, Sunday, Lord Bishop of Chester; 7th, Wednesday, Rev. W. H. Brookfield; 9th, Friday, Rev. C. V. H. Sumner; 11th, Sunday, Lord Bishop of Durham; 14th, Wednesday, Rev. C. F. Tarver; 16th, Friday, Rev. John Ryle Wood; 18th, Sunday, Lord Bishop of Worcester; 21st, Wednesday, Rev. Canon Nepean; 23rd, Friday, Rev. Canon Harvey; 25th, Palm Sunday, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; 28th, Wednesday, Rev. W. Drake; 30th, Good Friday, Very Rev. the Dean of Westminster, Dr. Stanley; April 1st, Easter Day, Lord Bishop of Oxford, Lord High Almoner. Divine service at twelve o'clock.



[POETS' HALL—THE FRESCOS.]

POETS' HALL.

In presenting our readers this week with a view of the magnificently decorated chamber in the Palace of Westminster, named, from the pictures which adorn its walls, the Poets' Hall, but which, in fact, is the upper waiting hall of the House of Commons, we desire to call attention to the attempt which during the past eleven years has been made in this country to revive fresco painting, an art which was in its zenith in the days of Raphael and Michael Angelo, but which falling into disrepute, was revived only in 1816 by the German painters Overbeck, Veit and Schnorr.

Painting in fresco, as the latter word implies, is the execution of a design in water colours on *fresh* plastered walls, and is perhaps the most noble and imposing of all methods of painting. It does not truly admit of the softness, delicacy, or finish of execution, or the richness and depth of colour of oil painting; but the want of the inferior beauties compels the painter to rely upon the highest intellectual composition, conception, and expression, united with a largeness of style and freedom of handling which can only result from the greatest technical knowledge.

For this reason, and because the sombre light shed through the ornate and painted windows of the chambers and corridors of the New Houses of Parliament would render oil painting upon canvas obscure and ineffectual, the Royal Commissioners of Fine Arts recommended that all the appropriate spaces on the walls of the New Palace should be decorated with fresco.

This decision was an important epoch in the history of modern art, and it was very justly felt that such a revival would be but a trial; hence Mr. Wilson, the director of the Government School of Design, was sent to Italy to examine the best and most lasting frescos executed in the middle ages, and as well also upon what material they were painted. Mr. Wilson's report was that those frescos which were in the best state of preservation were executed on brick.

Despite this report, commissions were given to some of our best modern painters to attempt the revival of fresco painting upon the stone of which the New Palace is built—a stone, it is well known, that is crumbling to pieces day by day, rendering repairs necessary that ultimately will give the exterior the semblance of a vast pile of patch work.

The first attempt was made in the Poets' Hall. The subjects chosen were grand, the artists of great ex-

cellence; and as far as conception, execution, colour, and drawing, admirably have they worked for an historic fame—with what result, however, we shall soon see.

The names of C. W. Cope, R.A., J. R. Herbert, R.A., J. F. Horsley, and John Teniel are sufficient to justify the choice of the artists; while the subjects—viz., "King Lear and his Daughter," from Shakespeare; "Griselda," from Chaucer; "Satan starting at the touch of Ithuriel's Spear," from Milton; the "St. Cecilia," from Dryden; the "Death of Marmion," from Scott; the "Personification of the Thames," from Pope; the "Death of Lara," from Byron; and the "Red Cross Knight," from Spencer, enoble and are enabled by the building whose walls they were hoped to ornate for centuries to come.

The trial to revive fresco on such walls was ambitious, but it was noble; although, sad to say, so far as the Poets' Hall is concerned, futile. Thousands of pounds of public money have been wasted, and a canker-worm set in the heart of each painter; for his hoped-for immortality has resulted, as far as the before-mentioned works are concerned, in seeing the child of his genius pine away, dissolve—in plainer words, become almost obliterated during its parent's lifetime.

The charger in the "Red Cross Knight" is undiscernible; one of the chief figures in the "Death of Lara" has nearly vanished into thin air; the noble "Marmion" is a huge blot; and the colours in the "Personification of the Thames" have run into each other. If, indeed, as the artists say, it really be the damp—of a place, be it understood, that is admirably warmed by night and by day, and not their own want of knowledge of the art of fresco painting.

Truly it is a sorry sight to see these noble works come to such premature decay; why even the very obliging attendant policeman declares that he sometimes feels inclined to cry with vexation. Last session one M.P. even went so far as to recommend that the only cure for the distemper which has seized these works, was to whitewash the walls. And there would seem to be some truth in this, for although Mr. Herbert took nearly twelve months to re-paint and renovate his noble picture of "King Lear and his Daughters," the face of one of the figures has since run into something not unlike a filled pudding-bag. But stay, the works in Poets' Hall were the first—painted ten or twelve years ago. Since then Mr. Ward, R.A., has decorated the walls of the Peers' Corridor with historic pictures, which it is supposed will prove more lasting, inasmuch that they have

slate for their foundation and a space for air half an inch deep between the slate and the laths to which the latter is affixed by means of battens at the end.

The greatest trial, however, of the fresco revival is the magnificent picture, by Mr. Herbert, of "Moses coming down from the Mount." This work, which takes up one side of the Peers' Robing Room, it is supposed will be more durable, from the fact that glass-water, a new discovery, has been used by Mr. Herbert. This experiment, and the completion of the work, occupied the latter gentleman six years; so that, exhibitory as £6,000 may seem, it is not more than remunerative.

In conclusion, we may add that the revival of fresco painting is on its trial in other places. Mr. Dyce, R.A., has decorated the garden saloon of Buckingham Palace. Again, there is a large fresco over the altar of All Saints' Church, in Margaret Street. But, largest of all in point of size, and perhaps merit, is "The School of Legislation," by Watts, placed across the north end of Lincoln's Inn Hall. This, by the way, is the largest fresco executed since the time of Michael Angelo.

FIFTEEN ladies of high rank left their cards at the Princess de Metternich's on New Year's Day. Each card was accompanied by £12 in gold pieces for distribution by the princess amongst the poor.

THE oldest reigning monarch in the world at the present time is the Landgrave of Hombourg, aged eighty-two. The next oldest are the Pope, aged seventy-two, and the King of Prussia, aged sixty-eight. The youngest sovereigns are the Emperor of China, aged eleven, and the King of Greece, aged twenty.

A MYSTERY.—Some of the Paris journals give some details relative to the mysterious disappearance of a young married lady named Quatrain, who has not been heard of since the 16th of November. It appears that at six o'clock in the evening of that day she went out, with head uncovered and very simply clad, to take a bath close by, in the Rue des Rosiers. An hour after, M. Quatrain returned home to dinner, and not finding his wife in the house, went to the baths in quest of her. He ascertained that she had not been there. The investigations since made by the police have led to a conviction that Madame Quatrain is not in the provinces, her description having been sent to all the offices. What can have become of her cannot be surmised, as she had not long been married, seemed exceedingly happy at home, and was a woman of the very best conduct.

FEBRUARY 10, 1866.
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[THE REMORSE OF COLTE LORAIN.]

that he has enlisted my sympathies and friendship!"

"He didn't come from village with you," returned Loraine, evidently hurt at the artist's reticence. "You found him lyin' on beach. Saw you pick him up—So can't be anybody be lyin' 'bout loose this manner!"

Walter made no reply, but by the time they reached the boat Loraine had dismissed his momentary petulance, and recovered his usual good humour.

Jack had already deposited the fugitive in the bottom of the boat, and as soon as his employer and Walter had entered it, he pushed it off, sprang in, and rowed rapidly towards the sloop.

There was but little difficulty in lifting the fugitive to the deck of the *Pretty Polly*, and Jack carried him to the cabin, laying him in one of the berths, then returning to his duties, getting the sloop under way for London.

Loraine followed Walter to the cabin, his curiosity in regard to the stranger being almost uncontrollable, and seated himself upon a stool to watch the young artist's movements. These consisted in bathing the flushed, fevered face, combing the tangled hair, loosening the garments, removing the shoes, and making the poor fugitive as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances.

When these preparations were completed, Walter turned down the light of the lantern, which Jack had lighted during his absence.

"Spose you've finished, Wal'er," observed Loraine, as the artist at last seated himself beside his patient, feeling his pulse. "Might tell me who person is comes in an' takes possession of sloop, disturbing domestic 'rangements. Due to me as host to know 'is position!"

"He is a gentleman," responded Walter. "In due timel you shall know all that I know about him. At present, I have no right to communicate even the small knowledge I have gained concerning him!"

Loraine put on an injured air, lapsing into silence, during which he paid the utmost attention to the mutterings and ravings of the invalid, but at length he remarked:

"Can't be gentleman, Wal'er. Ain't even 'spectable. Hear him talk dungeons, chains, gratin', an' bread water! Just escaped prison, bet anything on it. But, 'course, none my business. You'll come grief through this very person—see if I don't! Needn't come me for comfort if do. Idee gentleman! Minute set eyes on him, knew he's no better 'n should be!"

"I cannot explain to you anything about him at present," replied Walter. "I met him under peculiar circumstances, and know very little of him except

our guest, just look at his face! Worn as it is with suffering, you cannot help seeing on it the impress of an honourable character!"

Loraine arose and looked at the invalid, and acknowledged that the artist had spoken truly, and that the invalid looked like a gentleman.

"Evidently person consequence," he muttered, resuming his seat. "Speaks such excellent grammar 'clined to think he's curate, or schoolmaster, or bas-sador. Spose I'm not 'nough consequence know who is. Only Colte L'raine, old guardian, mis'ble old father, not fit live!"

The owner of the sloop continued in this manner for some time, delighting, as it seemed, in reviling himself and heapng contumely upon his own head, his personal vituperations being the fiercer because Walter did not hasten to contradict him and declare that he wronged himself and should instantly know all about the mysterious stranger.

When he at length paused for want of breath, Walter said, quietly:

"Can't you speak in a little lower tone, father? I think the sound of your voice excites our guest!"

Loraine looked confused and bewildered at this reception of his rambling denunciations of himself, and again became silent.

After a period of reflection, he looked at the artist, rather timidly at first, and then with more assurance, and then, assuming a jovial air, he tipped back his hat, saying:

"Well, Wal'er, ain't time supper? Hungry's shark. Jes' give me key cupboard, so can get something eat! Clare this sea-air gives awful appetite!"

Instead of yielding up the key as requested, Walter unlocked the cupboard, set out sufficient food for an ample repast for three, and then said, as he put the key back in his pocket:

"When you have eaten, you had better take Jack his meal. I hope the poor fellow gets enough to eat!"

Loraine made no reply. He had not demanded the key on account of hunger, but because his stimulants were all in the closet, and he wished to refresh himself with them. Walter, however, did not seem to comprehend his real motive, but took his seat at the table, applying himself to the manufacture of some excellent coffee, talking cheerfully and pleasantly as he did so, and before the beverage was ready for use, Loraine's brow had cleared, and his sullen, injured look vanished.

"There, isn't that a delicious odour?" asked Walter, as the fragrant coffee scented the cabin. "It is better than before. Come to the table, father."

THE
BELLE OF THE SEASON.

By W. E. CHADWICK.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Think not the good,
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,
Shall die forgotten all; the poor, the pris'ner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,
Shall cry to heav'n and pull a blessing on thee.

Rose.

LORAIN and Jack Marlow, on hearing Walter's summons, hastened towards him, while the young artist continued to advance with his burden in his arms. Jack came up first, and Walter explained to him that he had unexpectedly encountered a friend who was very ill, and who must be carried aboard the sloop, and then taken to London, adding:

"So take hold of him, my good man, and assist me to carry him to the boat!"

Jack obeyed, insisting, however, upon carrying the struggling fugitive alone, because, as he explained, the young gentleman did not look well. The worthy sailor had viewed the strange occurrences of the day, including Walter's seclusion in the cabin, Loraine's singular manner and conduct, and the artist's going ashore, without the least suspicion that anything was wrong between his passengers. During Walter's absence, Loraine had not ventured to explain that the sloop must immediately return to London, and Jack had just received his first intimation to that effect.

As he proceeded in advance of the artist towards the boat, the sailor soon met the owner of the sloop, whose progress over the sands had been much slower than his own; and he slackened his pace, as he said:

"Your son, sir, has found a sick friend, an' says as we are to sail for London direct!"

"Yes, sail for Lon'on," replied Loraine. "But sick 'em? Don' un'stand. Go on, while speak m' son!"

He waved his hand to Jack to proceed, and then stood still, waiting for Walter. The latter had walked slowly, looking up and down the coast with a fear that the pursuers might be on the track of the fugitive, but he soon came up with Loraine, who hastened to ask him who his sick friend was, where he had become acquainted with him, and how he had now found him.

"I cannot explain to you anything about him at present," replied Walter. "I met him under peculiar circumstances, and know very little of him except

Lorraine refused; but as Walter poured for him a brimming cup of the beverage and dropped into it several tempting white lumps of sugar, his resistance gave way, he drew forward his chair, and was again himself.

A young gentlemen usually at convivial suppers exert themselves to amuse and interest their companions by their wit and humour, so Walter now exerted himself to please the man he deemed his father. And Lorraine allowed his attention to be diverted from the cupboard and from his guest's identity, and told stories of his experiences in Australia and elsewhere—stories so totally devoid of interest to the listener, that it showed good heart and great self-control in him to keep up his gentle smile and occasional remarks.

With all his attention to Lorraine, Walter did not neglect his guest, and as he bent over him, smoothing his pillow, the owner of the sloop remarked:

"Wal'er, you ought give him somethin' eat. P'raps a drop of something drink might help him. When I've been sick fore now, a drop drink has fetched me round d'rectly."

"He is better without food," replied Walter; "and as to drink, I give him water. But what were you saying about the miner?"

Lorraine immediately resumed his narrative, which continued until he became too sleepy to speak connectedly, and then he said:

"Think I'll go bed, Wal'er. Was up last night. If need 'sistance, can call me."

Removing his outer garments, he crept into the upper berth, and was soon asleep. When this state was announced by an unconscious snore, Walter mused:

"I think I made a good beginning with him tonight. In the morning I will have a long talk with him, and endeavour to reclaim him from his present course. How singular that Rosenbury should apply to my own father to kill me. I cannot comprehend it. And that my father should consent to murder his own son seems incredible! There is something behind this that I don't understand. Lord Rosenbury must have some hold upon my father. But what can it be?"

While he considered the subject, the young artist went out upon the deck with the food which Lorraine had forgotten to take to Jack, and the sailor now accepted it, declaring, however, that he had stored a quantity of things in his department, and all he cared for from the cabin was an occasional cup of hot coffee.

Walter returned to the cabin, warmed what remained of the coffee already made, and brought it to the sailor, apologizing for having forgotten it before.

"Oh, it's no matter, sir," responded Jack, politely. "It's better now'n earlier, since I've got to be up all night. The old gentleman, beginn' your parding, sir, won't take my turn to-night, I s'pose?"

"He is asleep, Jack, but you can let me know when you want to sleep, and I dare say I can manage the sloop. I know something about the management of small vessels."

"Oh, I wouldn't think of troublin' you," returned the sailor. "I can keep awake to-night, and p'raps in the mornin' your pa might like to take my place a little while."

Walter repeated his offer, and soon after returned to the cabin and his patient.

Notwithstanding his assurances and the strength of the coffee, Jack went to sleep at his post, and the artist concluded to allow the little vessel to lie to until morning, it being impossible for him to attend to it and the invalid at once.

All night the poor fever-stricken fugitive raved of his long imprisonment, of a terrible and powerful enemy, of a gentle and loving daughter, who was dearer to him than life, and by turns he pleaded piteously for release and freedom, and struggled with imaginary fetters. He tried to leave his berth, but every time he started up Walter's gentle hand was placed on his hot forehead, and Walter's gentle voice breathed comforting assurances, which, though not understood, seemed to reassure the invalid.

But in all his ravings, the patient did not let fall a single clue to his identity, did not mention the name of his enemy, and called his daughter only by those pet names familiar in every household, so that the young artist could not imagine who he was, or where he belonged—save that he was evidently an Englishman and a gentleman.

Walter could not help wondering at his own singular interest in the hunted fugitive. He had thought of him so often since meeting him so strangely at Rock Land; had wondered greatly at his disappearance in the mysterious yacht; had pondered over his vague communications so long, that he now regarded him with an absorbing interest, not unmixed with pitying tenderness.

He watched over him all night as a son might have watched over a sick father, kept the door open that

the cabin air might be cool and fresh, gave him water to drink, and bathed his head and face often; but it became evident to him that with the few and simple appliances at hand he could do nothing to arrest the progress of the terrible fever that was consuming the health and strength of his guest.

"If we were only on our way!" he mused, as the morning beams entered the cabin, causing the dim lantern-light to pale. "A good physician might be able to break up this fever yet. I think I will arouse Jack."

Before doing so, he made some coffee for the sailor, and then proceeded with it to the deck. Jack was already at the helm, rubbing his eyes, and looking greatly ashamed for having slept.

"Beg your parding, sir," he said, apologetically.

"I was tredin' n' I thought for."

"Never mind," responded the artist, kindly. "We must endeavour now to make up for lost time. Drink your coffee and eat some breakfast as quickly as possible. I am in haste to reach London, so that my friend can have medical attendance."

Jack obeyed, producing his breakfast from the forecastle, and then resumed his duties, getting the sloop under way, and declaring that the wind was exactly right for the return voyage.

Walter then returned to the cabin, finding that Lorraine had arisen, and was regarding his patient.

"Mornin', Wal'er," said the owner of the sloop. "This fren' yours is dangerous. He jes' grabbed me by the leg, callin' me vil'ous doctor, and if hadn't got out as I did, dare say he'd killed me. He's little too violent. How feel bein' up all night?"

"Very well," was the reply. "I am young and vigorous, and do not mind a night's sleeplessness. Your breakfast is ready."

Lorraine eyed the repast discontentedly, glanced at the closet-door, then with a sigh of resignation went on deck to finish his toilet, make his ablutions, and breathe the morning air. He soon returned and took his place at the table with Walter.

When they had finished the meal, the artist said:

"Now, father, as our guest seems more quiet, let us have a good talk with each other."

"Ver' good!" assented Lorraine.

"I have been thinking during the night," continued Walter, seriously, "how very singular it was that Lord Rosenbury should have made a proposal to you to murder your own son. It seems to me that you should have been the last person in the world to whom he should have applied to execute such a villainous plan. I have come to the conclusion that he has some hold upon you—"

"No, no!" interrupted Lorraine, in alarm. "No such thing, Wal'er! applied to me because I old tenant-umble fren' of Roseby family. There's no secret!"

Walter involuntarily smiled at the weak and silly excuse of his supposed father, and resumed:

"What you have last said confirms my suspicion. Lord Rosenbury has a hold upon you. I have no wish to intrude upon your secrets nor to force myself into your confidence. If this hold is founded upon money obligations, I must beg of you to pay them immediately, and I will give you the money for the purpose!"

"You're too kind, Wal'er," faltered the conscience-stricken Lorraine. "Tain't money. Keep all you've got, an' don't spen' another farthing on me. I don't deserve it. I am a misle worthless villain!"

"Erin you may be, father, but you are not worthless," responded Walter, kindly. "No one can be utterly worthless while they can feel the pangs of remorse—and I am sure you repeat of your wrong doings, don't you, father?"

"I do—I do!" assented Lorraine, with tears. "Oh, if I could do it all over ag'in! I've done wrong. I ought to be killed. I'd be bliged to you, Wal'er, if you'd knock me on head. I've wronged you ter'ble an' can never never undo it!"

As he concluded, the erring man sobbed bitterly, showing that his remorse was genuine.

Walter took it for granted that the "wrong" alluded to meant the intended desertion on an uninhabited northern island, and replied, soothingly:

"I forgive you, father. Although you did very wrongly in consenting to such a wicked scheme, I am convinced you could never have had the heart to execute it. I know you must have some affection for your own and only son!"

"Precious little!" muttered Lorraine, bitterly, under his breath.

"Knowing your peculiar weaknesses," resumed Walter, "I can make more excuses for you than for Lord Rosebury. His guilt, it seems to me, is deeper than yours. I find it hard to believe such wickedness of him," he added, thoughtfully. "With such noble-minded, noble-hearted parents, how can he have become an assassin? And yet I can believe it, too, after his late insults to his mother!"

"Insults—lad'ship!" ejaculated Lorraine. "Is't possible? Why, he's cuttin' own throat 'sulth' her! What's he done, Wal'er?"

Walter hesitated about explaining his words for several reasons. He did not wish her ladyship's unhappiness to be made known; he wanted no one to become aware that Rosenbury had failed in deference and respect towards her ladyship; he did not wish to describe a family scene in which he had been a reluctant participant, and, finally, Lorraine was scarcely a desirable confidant, being scarcely yet recovered from the effects of the previous day's unlimited bibulations. All these reasons he explained, but Lorraine begged so earnestly and tearfully for further confidence, that at length Walter yielded to his desire, with the idea that it would put an end to any further intimacy between his lordship and Lorraine.

"How foolish!" groaned Lorraine, when he had concluded. "If he'd on'y let things alone. If he keeps on, he'll work out his own destruction. Wish could drown all thought. Could'n you give me something drink, Wal'er?"

"Now, father," said the artist, kindly, "I feel your troubles all spring from something to drink. Couldn't you get over your weakness, and either be temperate in your use of such things, or, if that is impossible, abstain altogether? I want you to become a man worthy of respect. Won't you try, for my sake?"

Lorraine replied in the affirmative.

Encouraged by his ready acquiescence, Walter set forth the advantages that would accrue to both when Lorraine should become a well-conducted member of society, and promised to assist him.

"I feel actated," said Lorraine, after a long conversation. "Think I'll take turn on deck. Better lie down, Wal'er. Shall never forget your kindness—never. Love you better'n all the world."

Lorraine's countenance showed traces of emotion as he proceeded to the deck, and he walked to and fro several times before addressing Jack. At length, he seated himself on a stool near the sailor, saying:

"Mornin', my good fren'. Hope see you gain. How's health?"

Jack replied that he was well, and returned the question.

"Not well, tall," was the dejected reply. "Feel mel'choly. No use livin'. Bout tired life."

"Sorry, sir," said Jack. "If it's because I flopped off last night, I didn't go for to do it, sir. Sleep took me by surprise. But the Pretty Polly is making up for lost time now, sir."

"The Pretty Polly!" repeated Lorraine, gloomily. "Mus' change name. Bain' nautical man, you might 'sist me to name—sumthin' not gay, you know!"

Jack devoted a little time to cogitation, and announced:

"The Petrel is a nice name, sir, for a little craft like this."

"The Petrel! Ver' good. But 'taint expressive enough. Le' me think. Ah! have it. The Morse-ful Petrel! That's the new name of sloop. I'll have it painted over when get to Lon'on. Don't le' me hear any more Pollies!"

Jack expressed his admiration of the new title, although not expressly comprehending it, and Lorraine looked gloomily over the side of the sloop as if meditating an immediate descent into the water.

"Better if I was dead!" he muttered. "Life's no charma. Wou'er how 'twould feel to drown!"

"Don't be having such thoughts, sir," remonstrated Jack. "Cheer up. Take a drop of something, if I might be so bold—"

Lorraine turned around abruptly.

"My fren'," he said, "I'd willin'ly take a drop, on'y my son's busy with sick fren', an' got the key of closet. Could you," he added, with an air of mystery, "lend or sell me a little cheerful drink? P'raps you've got some aboard for yourself. Don't like to 'sturb my son, you know. See here."

He handed Jack a half-sovereign, which that individual very reluctantly refused, saying:

"There's grog aboard, but bought with your money. You'll find it in the fo'c'sle. Being yours, you can help yourself, sir!"

"You're honest fellow!" declared Lorraine, admiringly. "Take th' money as present, my good fren'. If liquor's mine, help yourself 's often a you like!"

Placing the coin in his eager hand, Lorraine made his way to Jack's quarters, found the stores alluded to, and in due time emerged upon the deck, his hat tipped back jauntily, and his face beaming with joviality.

As he resumed his seat beside the sailor, Walter came on deck, looked surprised at the change in Lorraine's appearance, which surprise was changed to disappointment, when the owner of the sloop declared:

"No, Wal'er, try teach' old dog new tricks. Stimulants necessary, my peculiar consti'utions. So delicate need strength'ning beverages. Coffee'll do for women an' babies. Ain't vox'd, hope, Wal'er. Don't

get vexed! If man vented temp'rance had known me, made 'ception my favour!"

Walter turned from Loraine, sick at heart, and glanced over the waters. As he did so, his eyes rested upon a little vessel between the sloop and the shore, and quite near the latter. It was proceeding very slowly, as if searching for some one supposed to be on the coast. A few minutes' scrutiny showed it to be the mysterious yacht of Rock Land Cave—the very yacht that had carried away the fugitive—and Walter instantly concluded that it was now searching for him.

"They must be terribly in earnest in their design of recapturing the poor gentleman," he thought, "since, in addition to their land-force, they employ the yacht to search for him. It is probable that when they captured him before they did not dare to take him back to his captivity by any other route than water. Some one might have recognized him, had he been taken by rail, or he might have convinced some one of his sanity. Evidently, they hope to capture him now, and put him aboard the yacht again. I hope the yacht won't speak us!"

He was soon relieved on that point, the strange craft standing in for the shore, as if with the idea that the fugitive was within their view, and the sloop speedily increased the distance between them. Walter resolved to take the event as a hint to exercise the most extreme caution in regard to his guest when taking him ashore and afterwards. He was convinced that his patient was an injured gentleman, with a powerful enemy who wished to remove him from his path, and he determined to use every effort to reinstate him in his position.

As he started to return to the cabin, Loraine touched him on the arm, and the geniality of his countenance somewhat subdued, remarked:

"Say you ain't vexed, Wal'er. You're goin' back marry girl an' be happy, so don't lay up wrath 'gainst old father!"

Walter reassured him—speedily restoring his joviality—while at the same time he gave up all hope of changing the nature or habits of his supposed father.

"Here is your key," he said, sadly. "I cannot always play the gaoler to a cupboard, so I give up the office now—particularly as you have other supplies. If you will not be a man, I cannot force you to be one."

Loraine received the key with many deprecatory remarks, yet with evident pleasure, and the artist returned to his patient.

The day was passed by the owner of the sloop in cultivating the acquaintance of Jack Marlow, he having discovered him to be a congenial spirit in consequence of his civility of the morning, but he took good care to exact the deference from his seaman which he deemed due to himself as a "ship-owner" and person of unlimited means. He told marvellous tales of his wealth, his house in town, his country estates, his rent-rolls, &c.—the items all corresponding as nearly as possible with Rosenbury's possessions, to which Loraine felt that he had a sort of claim; and he had the proud satisfaction of feeling that—at least, in the eyes of one individual—he was the greatest man in England.

The day passed less pleasantly to Walter; and yet, perhaps not—for there is always deep pleasure in doing good, in acting the part of the Samaritan to people who have no claim upon us, the pleasure thereby being intensified with a sense of having simply fulfilled a duty.

When night came on, Loraine offered to act as watcher, but he was not exactly in condition to fulfil the necessary duties with care and thoughtfulness, and his services were declined. He therefore retired at a late hour, and did not awaken until nearly morning, when Jack entered the cabin to announce that the sloop was within a mile of London Bridge.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Or carry smiles and sunshine in my face,
When discontent sits heavy at my heart.

Addison.

THE appointment at Lady Rosenbury's from which Walter Loraine had been so unavoidably detained had been faithfully kept by his betrothed. She had proceeded to the trysting-place, accompanied by her maid, immediately after dinner, on the evening of her lover's abduction, and had been somewhat surprised to find that he was not awaiting her.

"You find me all alone, my dear," said Lady Rosenbury, with a smile, as she bestowed upon the maiden a motherly greeting. "You look grave because Walter has not yet arrived? I dare say, my dear, that his studio has been crowded with visitors all day, for I have made no secret of my appreciation of his genius, and everyone is eager to see his last picture—mine, you know."

Geraldine assented, and her friend continued:

"Let us go to the boudoir, my dear. These great drawing-rooms are so dreary in comparison with that cosy retreat."

Her ladyship conducted her guest to the more favoured apartment, which was brilliantly lighted, and presented, with all its elegance, a home-like appearance. The two ladies engaged in conversation, of which Walter was the subject, and awaited his appearance with some impatience.

As they were beginning to indulge in a little unspoken anxiety at his non-appearance, Rosenbury entered the room.

His so-called lordship was attired with elaborate care and seemed to be in fine spirits. There was a triumphant expression on his face, which, a close observer might have noticed, was not unmixed with gloom. In truth, although he was overjoyed at the probable success of his plan in regard to Walter, he had not yet become so hardened as to contemplate his share in the villainous scheme without fear and a twinge of remorse. And yet he felt that if he could undo his part in the transaction and save Walter's life by the simple utterance of one word, he would leave that word unspoken. He believed that his own safety and happiness depended upon the artist's death, and having already so rapidly advanced in the path of crime, he was resolved to proceed still further and make himself perfectly secure in his false position.

He had suspected the lovers' appointment for that evening in consequence of Lady Rosenbury having declined an invitation out, and he determined to take Walter's place and render himself as agreeable as possible to the maiden.

It was with this view he had now entered her presence.

His greetings to Lady Rosenbury, as well as her guest, were most respectful and deferential, and his manner was very quiet and gentlemanly as he seated himself and endeavoured to open a conversation, yet his presence was felt by both ladies as a restraint.

"There seems to be quite an excitement about Walter Loraine's new picture," he observed, at length, when he had become convinced that Loraine's plans had prospered, and that Walter would not trouble him again. "His studio is fairly besieged every day. I hear that he has left town—"

"Left town!" said Lady Rosenbury. "You have been misinformed, Raymond. Walter has an appointment with me for this evening."

"Perhaps I may have been misinformed," replied Rosenbury, with pretended indifference. "If he is not gone he will of course call upon you. He is a very punctual man, I remember. I simply mentioned a rumour I happened to hear, but which certainly is too discreditable not to have some truth in it!"

"A discreditable rumour about Walter!" said Lady Geraldine, with flushed cheeks and flashing eyes. "I do not understand you, Lord Rosenbury!"

"Be so kind as to explain yourself, Raymond," said Lady Rosenbury, with some sternness of manner.

"I fear I have already said too much—"

"You have said too much or too little, Raymond," responded her ladyship. "As Walter's friend, I demand an explanation!"

Rosenbury shrugged his shoulders, and answered:

"I certainly spoke very thoughtlessly when I referred to the silly rumour which I heard to-day. Of course, you ladies know better, but it was to the effect that he had eloped to Scotland with a young heiress who has long been infatuated with him!"

"You may well call such a rumour 'silly,'" remarked her ladyship, smiling. "Be so good as to deny it should you hear it again!"

Rosenbury bowed and glanced at Geraldine.

He saw that the shaft he had deemed so clever and which had intended to arouse her to the deepest indignation against the artist had entirely failed of its mark. Her cheeks were no paler than usual, and there was actually an amused smile upon her lips, as if his invention seemed to her the very height of absurdity.

The maiden spent the evening with her friend, but at length announced that she must take her departure. Rosenbury left the room, evidently with the intention of preparing himself to accompany her, and her ladyship rang the bell, giving an order to a servant. She then said:

"I do not understand, dear Geraldine, the reason of Walter's absence this evening, but of course he has some good reason."

"I fear he is ill!" returned Geraldine, with tearful eyes. "Oh, he should be very ill in his lonely rooms, with no one but his valet to attend upon him!"

"He was very well last night, dear," answered Lady Rosenbury, soothingly. "He is very healthy and vigorous, and I cannot think he is ill!"

"He must be!" persisted the maiden, "else he would have kept his appointment. He would not allow business to come between us!"

"Do not give way to anxiety," said her ladyship,

herself anxious and uneasy. "I will send to his studio the first thing in the morning to inquire about him. Should he call to-morrow to see you, I will send you a note by a servant!"

Geraldine forced herself to be content with this decision, particularly as the hour was late and her fears of illness might after all be groundless. Lady Rosenbury was comforting her, when Raymond re-entered the apartment equipped for the street.

"I beg, Lady Geraldine," he said, "that you will allow me to escort you home!"

"I have already ordered the carriage for her," replied Lady Rosenbury, as the maiden hesitated. "Lady Geraldine and her maid will drive home!"

The maiden gave her friend a grateful look, and Rosenbury bit his lips in anger and chagrin. He was on the point of saying that the distance to be traversed was very short, and that the young lady had had no difficulty in walking it the previous evening with Walter Loraine, but he wisely restrained himself, bowed coldly, and endeavoured to conceal his disappointment.

The carriage was soon announced, and he escorted the guest to its very door, helping her in, and himself closed its portal behind her maid. He then sauntered off to his club.

On arriving home, the maiden retired to her own apartments to think and dream of her lover, whom her disturbed imagination pictured in trouble and danger.

The following day and evening were passed without a word from Lady Rosenbury or a line from Walter, and the maiden's anxiety became positive alarm. She was inclined to repeat her visit to her friend, but a conviction that she would also meet Rosenbury himself kept her at home. She assured herself again and again that if he were ill he would let her know the fact; or, if he were unable to do so, Lady Rosenbury would communicate it. Not once did her mind recur to the silly fabrication of Raymond, and not once did she blame Walter for his silence, her confidence in his love and fidelity being unlimited.

The second morning brought the letter which Walter had been at such pains to post at Burleyford, but it never reached the hands of the Lady Geraldine. It arrived at a later hour than Walter had expected, and was sent up with several other letters to the library. They were delivered to the countess, who was sitting alone, having just come from the breakfast-room, where her husband yet lingered.

Her ladyship glanced over the missives, selected the one addressed to the Lady Geraldine, paused to wonder at the post-mark and the pencilled superscription, and tore it open, deliberately reading its contents.

She had scarcely finished its perusal when she was startled by the sound of footsteps approaching the library-door, and she slipped the missive in her pocket just as the earl entered.

"Well, Justina," he said, pleasantly, "you are busy writing acceptances of dinner invitations, I suppose. You ought to be happy now that you have compassed your desire to enter upon fashionable life, and have so soon become the object of so much attention."

"I am content," replied the countess. "I have entered upon a busy yet idle sort of existence that suits me very well after those dull, monotonous years at Milan. How people can live without gaiety I cannot imagine. I wonder at my old manner of living. But here are the letters," she added, pointing to the little pile before her. "And here," she concluded, "is a very singular letter from that artist to Geraldine. It appears that he is in the country somewhere, and has failed to keep an appointment with her at the house of a mutual friend. He expects to return to-day. Now, Egbert, who can this friend of theirs be who assists and encourages them to defy your lawful authority?"

"I am sure I don't know!" was the response.

"I believe it is Lady Rosenbury," declared the countess. "Geraldine goes there often than elsewhere, and everybody says that her ladyship is remarkably devoted to that artist."

"Lady Rosenbury! Preposterous!" said the earl. "Why, Geraldine has always been intimate with her ladyship, so her visiting there often is no reason at all for implicating Lady Rosenbury in the matter. Besides, her ladyship is the mother of the favoured suitor—the one I favour—and she would never use her influence in behalf of a low-born painter, when by so doing she injures her own son. For once your astuteness is at fault, Justina. The oftener Geraldine visits at Rosenbury House, the better I shall be pleased."

The countess was silenced but not convinced. In her very first interview with Lady Rosenbury she had felt her own inferiority to her noble visitor, and, on noticing the maiden's love for her friend, her incipient jealousy had matured into a strong dislike.

She was too guarded to betray this feeling, however and dismissed the subject, destroying the letter while the earl perused his correspondence.

When he had finished his task, the wife produced a small collection of invitations and cards, and submitted them to him, demanding complete information in regard to the social position, &c., of the senders, and the earl hastened to gratify her curiosity.

In the midst of their discussion the page appeared, bearing a card, which he delivered to his master. The latter glanced at it, turned pale, and said:

"Show the gentleman in here."

As the page disappeared the earl turned to his wife and said, hurriedly:

"My dear Justina, I have a business-call. Please retire. I wish to see the gentleman alone. Go quickly."

The countess began to remonstrate, but her husband looked at her with an expression which compelled obedience, and she left the room by a door he indicated just as a man, with a hat slouched over his face, entered from the hall.

Her ladyship was unable to gain a view of his features, which seemed to be studiously concealed, and she lingered at the closed door of the inner room in the hope of hearing the conversation; but nothing reached her hearing save a quick, terrified cry, which was not repeated.

"A business call, and the earl screaming like that!" she muttered, indignantly, as she retreated to her room in despair of overhearing anything. "Egbert has a secret from me, but I will fathom it if woman's wit is worth anything!"

She waited a long hour in her own room for the departure of the stranger, but the hall-door at last announced his going, and she then expected the page to summon her to the library. But he did not come, and she grew perturbed at the earl's neglect. The thought finally occurred to her that doubtless she was expected to return without a summons, and she made her way to the library.

The page came out as she went in, but without a glance at him she addressed herself to her husband:

"Egbert, do you call this proper treatment—oh, what ever is the matter? Have you lost your senses?"

Her ladyship might well express astonishment, for the morning sunshine had been carefully secluded from the apartment, the windows were covered closely, and the magnificent lustre pendant from the ceiling was glittering with gaslight.

More singular than the transformation of the library was the change in the earl himself. His portly person seemed shrunk to half its usual size, his complexion was livid. He was crouched in a large easy-chair in a shrinking, fearful attitude, and at the entrance of his wife he half-startled up with a look of wild alarm.

"Egbert, have you lost your senses?" repeated the countess, wonderingly. "What mad freak is this? Why do you light the gas at twelve o'clock in the day? I never saw such a singular performance in my life!"

"Hush! Justina," said the earl, feebly. "Don't make such a noise. I cannot hear if anyone comes!"

"Are you expecting some one?"

The earl answered only by a frightened look, which irritated his wife extremely.

"I think," she said, "I'll turn off the gas and open the windows—"

"Don't!" cried the earl, in a tone of abject entreaty. "I cannot have it done. Oh! go away, Justina. I want to be alone."

The countess desisted from carrying out her expressed intention, but with mingled curiosity and alarm, she asked:

"Who was that man who was here just now, Egbert? You need not answer that he is a business agent, for I know that no affair of money could reduce you to such a state of complete prostration. What is your secret? You need not fear to tell your wife. Our interests are the same. If you fear and dread anything, I ought to know all about it, since your danger is also mine."

The countess spoke earnestly, and with some appearance of affection, but her words fell without weight, even if they were comprehended.

The earl's face seemed to grow, if possible, more livid and ghastly, and his eyes gleamed from a purple circle with a fearful expression, and he glanced over his shoulders and at the door with strange apprehensiveness.

Her ladyship continued to urge her claims to his confidence, but the only reply she elicited was a shrill whisper to the following effect:

"Don't speak so loud, Justina. Some one might hear you. Don't call my name, I beg of you. Oh! if you'd only go away!"

"But my place is here," persisted the countess. "I

will send for the family physician. Your appearance frightens me."

The earl instantly negatived her proposal to send for the physician, and crept closer in his chair.

"Do you want your niece?" asked Justina, at a loss what to do.

"My niece, Geraldine?" whispered the earl, looking around him. "Oh, my heart! my heart!"

He clasped his hands to his side and breathed gaspingly for a few moments, during which the countess stood by him irresolute and frightened. She had heard of the earl's malady and of the physician's opinion in regard to it, and she again proposed to send for the physician.

"No, no!" replied the earl, recovering from his sudden pain. "I am well enough. Please go away and send my page to me."

This being all he would allow her to do for him, the countess withdrew. The page was seated outside the door, pale and anxious, and hastily obeyed her direction to attend to his lordship. Her ladyship then, after some minutes' thought, proceeded to the apartment of the Lady Geraldine to inform her of the earl's singular illness, and learn if he were subject to frequent similar attacks.

(To be continued.)

WAGES IN NEW ZEALAND.—Good general servants rate from £30 to £35, £40 being the very highest wages given in private families. Housemaids, £30; nursemaids, £20 to £26; women cooks in hotels, £1 per week to £2 10s.; men cooks, ditto, from 50s. to £3 10s.; housemaids for hotels, 15s. to £1 per week; kitchenmaids, £1 per week; scullerymaids, £30; barmaids in Dunedin, £2 per week; ditto, up country, £2 to £3 per week; ditto, to west coast, from 50s. to £4 per week. Male servants—Grooms, £2 per week; married couples, from £75 to £100 per annum; coachmen, £2 per week; gardeners, £1 to 50s. per week; shepherds, from £50 to £70 per annum; bullock drivers, 50s. per week; shearers, 25s. per hundred and rations; milkmen, 30s. per week; boys, from 10s. to £1 per week. Governesses, from £50 to £100 per annum; dressmakers, 4s. per day, or 20s. per week; machinists, from 20s. to 30s. per week; milliners, from 30s. to 60s. per week.

THE BRIDAL PRESENTS.

CHAPTER I

OH, now beautiful!"

"Superb!"

"The richest gift of all!"

These were part of the admiring exclamations which followed the opening of a handsome casket in a room already crowded and glittering with bridal presents and wedding paraphernalia.

There was a flutter amid the bevy of beautiful girls. Their cheeks flushed more redly and their eyes shone more brightly, if possible, than before.

It was but two days to the wedding, and they were busy in the chamber of the bride-to-be.

It was enough to flush the cheek of youth and beauty to be in that chamber, in the mid of laces, silks, garlands, flowers—everything costly, exquisite, and profuse.

The veil and wreath—ordered from Paris—lay upon the bed, along with the bridal robe, a mass of delicate and priceless lace through which glimmered the rich lustre of satin.

Chairs and sofas were laden with dresses, thrown upon them carelessly, preparatory to being folded for packing.

The constant arrival of packages coming in, not only from modistes and jewellers, but also from friends who were sending in bridal presents, kept the four lively bridesmaids in a state of excitement and delight which they no doubt imagined the acme of earthly happiness—or at least only one step this side of that paradisiacal height which they innocently thought must be occupied by the object and recipient of all this flutter and splendour. They were as happy as they could be, and not be the principal performer herself.

She certainly seemed a person to be envied as she sat, more quiet than the others, in a sort of luminous tranquillity, looking at the articles which they displayed before her. Sweets to the sweet—beautiful things to the beautiful.

At last came the casket which called forth such fervent praise; it had been delivered by the expectant bridegroom himself into the hands of the lady-aunt, who presided over the house, by her to be given to his darling Annie.

Upon opening it, it was found to contain a set of jewels—necklace, brooch, car-rings and bracelets—of such value that they seemed magnificent, even in consideration of the great wealth of the giver.

Opals of singular beauty, set about with diamonds and ornaments especially appropriate to a bridal trousseau.

The rosy light, blushing and burning through the opals, was like the glow of love reddening the pure heart of the young girl and brightening through her cheeks.

Her attendants were eager to try how they became her.

They clasped them about her throat and arms, hung the dazzling pendants in her ears, and placed the brooch upon the breast, heaving with a triumph which kept the diamonds in a quiver of glory.

"Mr. Marchford ought to see you now!" exclaimed the youngest bridesmaid, standing back to take in all the splendour of the effect.

Annie glanced into the mirror before which she was sitting. She might be forgiven for a smile of self-content.

The rich brown hair, the dark blue eyes, the dazzling whiteness of shoulders and arms, rounded into the fullness of feminine symmetry, and still delicate with the first bloom of youth, the noble forehead and expressive mouth, were all harmonious.

"The cry is, still they come!" exclaimed another joyous girl, as she took a parcel from the hand of a servant at the door. "Here, Annie! it is so small, it ought to be something precious."

The bride took up the tiny package which was thrown in her lap—a brown paper envelope without any address whatever.

Untying the thread which bound it, she came upon a little box which, laughing and triumphant, she opened.

A small, old-fashioned golden heart, battered and worn, strung upon a black silk cord—that was all. The girls tittered.

Evenly it was a jest, which they did not quite understand.

But Annie turned deathly pale; for a few moments she sat stupefied and silent, unable to recover herself; and when she did speak, her voice was trembling and constrained.

"Somebody is amusing himself at my expense," she said.

"It comes from one of your old lovers," cried a merry girl.

And all the other thoughtless young creatures laughed, going on with their bewitching work carelessly, taking, fortunately, but little notice of Annie's agitation.

The golden heart was clasped tightly in her hand, and she sat looking mechanically at herself in the mirror, without seeing how white and stricken she had grown.

"Do, for pity's sake, let us take care of that priceless thing for you! Where shall we put it that it may be perfectly safe? How much Mr. Marchford would admire it! We'll give it a conspicuous place among the bridal gifts, when the table is arranged."

Again the bevy of fair girls laughed, fluttering like butterflies amid the wilderness of exquisite things which filled the chamber.

Annie got up and affected to put the despised ornament away, but in reality she hid it in her bosom and then quickly, and almost with loathing, laid aside the costly jewels, the last and most sumptuous present of Mr. Marchford.

Retreating to a bay-window, she let the curtain drop between herself and the busy group within.

The pale splendour of a declining October sun fell upon her; beneath her gaze the tiny garden, which glowed like a spark in the stony heart of a great city, flamed with a few autumnal flowers which had braved the early frosts.

She was looking at them, but she did not see them. She had taken the heart from her bosom and was grasping it in her cold fingers.

It seemed as if that worn and battered trinket had some petrifying power, from the chill which crept over her.

The brief day ended; the red light of the sunset was replaced against her cheek by grey shadows; some call of the merry party within startled her from the long trance in which she had been lost; a cry, sharp though subdued, burst out from her convulsed lips:

"If I knew where he was—if I could find him—I would leave all and go to him."

She kissed the heart, bursting into a storm of tears over it, but this relief was not long allowed her, as the call for her became more imperative, and she was compelled to leave her retreat.

"Mr. Marchford is below."

"He awaits the rising of the evening star."

"He is stretched on the rack of expectancy—pray, fly to his relief," and soft laughter vibrated upon every side.

"Mr. Marchford will take tea with us," said the stately aunt, who, never losing sight of the most de-

corous propriety, had herself entered the room to announce the fact, as well as to see with her own eyes if the toilette of her niece was in faultless order.

She could not, even in this last stage of bustle and confusion, allow anything so important to be slighted.

"What! tears?—well, I suppose they are natural. But bathe your face now, and change your dress. Wear your mazarine blue silk with the point-lace trimmings. And come down and thank Mr. Marchford for his generous gift. It is not often that betrothed young ladies have to thank their lovers for such gifts. I always knew him to be magnificent. (The very best match in every sense—high sense of honour, moral, old enough to be discreet, an irreproachable family, and almost uncounted wealth. Annie's very fortunate, thanks to that extraordinary beauty of hers, and to my tact). But hasten a little, if you please, Annie; for the bell will ring for tea in a very few moments."

Mrs. Stuart descended, but retired upon hearing her niece's step, willing that the lovers should have a few precious moments to themselves before they should be compelled to take their places at the table among so many others.

Mr. Marchford advanced to meet his affianced. He was a small refined-looking gentleman of about fifty.

"Why, how cold your hands are!—and you look pale. Are you ill, dear Annie? I am afraid all this preparation and excitement is too much for you."

Her eyes sank before his tender glance, but she yielded her forehead to his kiss, and was led to a seat by his side upon a sofa.

"Did you like the jewels? Did they satisfy the fastidious taste of my wife that is to be?"

"They were very beautiful, Mr. Marchford; subdued and splendid enough to beat even your wife."

He did not observe the slight accent of satire.

"I am so glad they pleased you. They were arranged after a design of my own; the jewels were all selected by me. I flatter myself I am a connoisseur in precious stones. Still, I wish they were even finer—nothing is quite rich enough, quite peerless enough for my Annie."

Her heart gave a sudden leap and then sank down so cold and heavy that she felt that hidden trinket burning over it. But she smiled—a woman will always smile, in life or death—and her companion went on with his calm, gentle manner, solicitous to bring back the usual rich bloom to her cheek.

In the meantime, what had been the vision which Annie Stuart saw with her mental sight, when she sat staring at the purple dahlias and the yellow chrysanthemums, with the time-worn golden heart grasped in her hand?

It was a vision far removed from the splendours of her present position as an honoured guest in the house of her aristocratic aunt, and leads us back in time precisely three years from that day and afternoon.

CHAPTER II.

It was one of those days of clear and sparkling beauty which come only in October.

Above, the sky was blue and fair, the infinite distances reaching up and up; around the horizon it was of a dreamy purple, melting downward into red.

The fields were golden with the stacked corn; the woods flamed with gorgeous colours, here a maple flashing out like fire, there an oak burning more darkly, with the yellow beeches shining through them all.

A boy of nineteen and a girl of sixteen, each with a basket in hand, went singing along through wood and over field, climbing the fences with a laugh, chattering together merrily as the squirrels frolicking in the trees.

His torn hat of home-braided straw, and his homespun jacket corresponded with her calico frock and gingham sun-bonnet. But their thoughts were not of outward appearances. Swinging their baskets, exclaiming at every transient bird or drifting leaf, they passed along, in sunshine and in shade, until they came to the cluster of chestnut trees which was the goal of their excursion.

"Hurrah, Annie, they are all right! The frost has opened the burs, and we shall have a glorious harvest. Stand back while I hurl a few sticks into the branches."

She stood back, her bonnet in her hand, looking now at the shivering boughs and now at the graceful, athletic motions of her companion.

Her hair fluttered in the wind, a glimmering banner of gold and brown; her rosy chin upthrown, revealed the whiteness of her lovely throat; already the roundness of an unusually symmetrical form showed the folds and outlines of her plain, scant dress. Her brilliant eyes, her glowing cheeks flushed with health and innocent excitement, made a picture in harmony

with the splendour of the day and the tints of wood and sky.

Merrily, like two children as they were, they toiled at their holiday task, until both baskets were full to overflowing.

"We've enough now to last us all the winter, Walter, and we've left plenty for the squirrels besides. How brown and bright they are!"

"Just the colour of your hair, Annie; only not so pretty, either."

He said this so frankly that she neither blushed nor frowned at the compliment, but met his smile with one as ingenuous.

"We shall enjoy them, and the walnuts we gathered last Saturday, when the cold winter evenings come. How happy we shall be those long evenings and the Christmas times! I almost wish they were here now; we always have so much more leisure; and you read so much to me."

"Annie," spoke Walter, with sudden gravity, "sit here under the trees with me a few moments before we go home. I feel inclined to speak of something that has been upon my mind a long time; something important—that is, to me."

They sat side by side under the dropping leaves, she looking into his face inquiringly, and without any idea of what his communication was going to be.

"I do not think I shall be here when the holidays come again, Annie. You will have to eat chestnuts and read books without me. I have made up my mind to go away," and his voice trembled a little from its brave tone.

"What do you mean, Walter?"

"I want to see something of the world, Annie. I've never been away from the farm; and we've both of us read and thought too much, Annie, to be entirely satisfied with this narrow experience, beautiful as this place is, and happy as I have been here. I've a pretty good education, thanks to your father's kindness, but it's not complete by any means. It's only that of a country boy, such as I am—a little better than the most, perhaps. I've been saving up money to carry out this plan for several years now, and I have one hundred and fifty pounds all my own. My time is up with your father, and I have his hearty approval of what I propose to do—which is, to go to some good academy a year, and then try and get a situation, where I can pay my way and still have opportunities for study as well as observation. What do you think of it? I expect to start in about a month."

There was no answer, and looking at the girl by his side, he saw that she was crying.

"Oh, Annie, and are you so sorry?"

"I know that I am selfish, Walter. Indeed, indeed, I wish you to go—but it comes so suddenly and I shall be so lonely—only think, Walter, how lonely! Nobody—nobody—to—" here she broke down in sobs, and said no more.

"Annie! Annie!" pleaded the youth, holding her hands more tightly than he was aware of; but she only sobbed the harder.

"I did not think you would grieve so much for me. That is, I feared you would not. There, is not that selfish? Shall I tell you all? I did not mean to, for I thought I should not dare to. It is in hopes of making myself more worthy of you, Annie—of fitting myself at least to retain your esteem—that I wish to go away. I know very well what I am, and what you will be; and how soon you will learn to look down upon me."

"Oh, Walter, you are better than I!"

"Fie, Annie, don't say that, just because your generous heart prompts you to soothe me. It is I who have everything to gain. Your parents are well enough off to be able to send you away to school if they wish; you have rich relatives, and besides if you had not an advantage in the world, you would be superior to everybody else in it. That's my candid opinion."

She could not help smiling through her tears.

"Who is silly now, Walter?"

"It's the plain truth; and you'll be told so often before you see me again, that you'll believe it, and forget the country boy who was the first to tell you so."

"Never, never, Walter!"

And with an impulse never before felt, and innocently yielded to, she turned and hid her tearful face in his breast.

He covered her bright hair with kisses; he lifted the sweet face, now burning with blushes, and kissed that too.

"Annie, I love you. I love you—so much that it almost frightens me—with a man's love, if I am but a boy. Oh! if you will only say that you love me, and will be true to me, I know that I can accomplish everything. I will make you proud of me. Only promise to be patient—and to wait."

"I promise you," she said, solemnly.

"May heaven give you grace to be faithful! A solemn prayer, Annie."

"I will give you a token," she whispered, taking from her neck a small black cord, to which was attached a gold heart.

It was her only ornament—that inexpensive little trinket—and dear to her accordingly.

"You are too good to me, Annie!"

And here his boyish courage gave way; he could say no more, but only silently and tremblingly press her to his breast.

His face was radiant with happiness, despite the nearness of parting which overshadowed them both.

She, too, lost for a time that sad thought of separation in the bliss, the sweet confusion and sweeter hope of "love's young dream."

Reluctantly, as the twilight fell, they aroused themselves to the realities of the present, standing one moment to reiterate their promises.

"Your token shall never leave me as long as you remain true, Annie, be it in life or death," murmured Walter, as he pressed her hands again.

And the baskets were taken up, and the two who had come forth children in heart and thought, returned in the evening shadows changed in both.

This was the vision which Annie Stuart had beheld with those staring eyes, looking out upon a city garden instead of the wide-spread, gorgeous panorama of country, as she sat with the golden heart, still held by the silken cord, once again in her hand, the first time in three years.

CHAPTER III.

The good mother thought it was the chill of the autumn evening which made the cheeks of Walter and Annie so red when they came home upon that memorable night. The profusion of nuts which they so ostentatiously displayed was accepted by her as the natural excuse of their prolonged absence. She was too busy to notice the stolen glances "the children" exchanged, or the small appetite they displayed after an excursion which should have sharpened it. For how should she know the two who had always regarded each other as sister and brother had suddenly discovered and confessed their preference for a different relationship?

Mrs. Stuart loved Walter as a son. He had been to her a kind and affectionate boy, of whose handsome face and many brilliant qualities she was exceedingly proud; for she had no sons of her own, and when their lost neighbour's orphan child was confided to them, it had been, upon her part, with a secret resolve to do by him a mother's part. Mr. Stuart, a sturdy, intelligent, well-to-do farmer, who had no harshness in his nature, and who could not but be pleased with the ambitious energy with which Walter always performed his allotted tasks, as well as admire the perseverance with which, in his leisure hours, he devoted himself to more intellectual pursuits, would willingly have acknowledged him as his adopted son. As for the bright-eyed child, the only other member of the household, to her, of course, Walter was the idol of her heart.

The Stuarts lived in the style of independent farmers. The land which they cultivated, though very beautiful and productive, was in a secluded section of the country, rather remote from the principal markets. The farm was about equally divided between grazing and wheat-raising; while there was just enough of a choice orchard to keep the family abundantly supplied with fruit. Fine cattle waded in the stream which glistened through the broad meadow; yellow wheat, in its season, waved upon the uplands; a charming strip of forest not only adorned the landscape, but furnished the glowing logs which filled the great kitchen fire-place in the winter months.

Thus Annie grew from year to year, until her bright head overreached the roses, aspiring towards the hollyhocks—grew as naturally graceful as the willows and beautiful like the roses, without thought or shaping.

Yet she was far from ignorant. She had some advantages which might have been envied her.

In the quaint bedroom of the old farm-house were two things which were its pride and its glory. One was book-case of polished oak, filled with well-selected reading matter; the other an ancient piano, which, despite of its slender, carved legs, almost trembling with the infirmities of age, still vindicated its title to former superiority by remnants of sweetness in which the skill of the young girl's fingers exulted.

These two venerable testimonials to the intelligence and good origin of the family were valued.

By one of those curious chances which occur for the benefit of fortunate people, there lived, in a little brown house buried almost out of sight in a valley about half a mile from the farm-house, two old maids.

They were sisters: isolated, misanthropic, and unique. But they were undeniably ladies, fashioned

by breeding, formal and refined, and possessed of all the accomplishments of rank.

They could paint flowers in water-colours, read French, and play the piano; all this they could do well—much better than most of the hastily-educated young ladies of the present day.

And all this the youngest of the sisters engaged to teach Miss Annie at a sum per annum which the proud parents, eager to have their daughter enjoy such unparalleled advantages, willingly paid.

Annie, at the age of sixteen, had been four years under the patient, conscientious tuition of Miss Mary, the youngest Miss Ogden, who was resolved that her pupil should speak as correct French and paint as life-like flowers as herself; and who had given the apt and brilliant girl just that kind of drilling upon the old piano as had tamed down the exuberances and baste of her performances, while it had not materially clipped the wings of her genius, for Annie was a natural musician, and did wonders with that ancient instrument.

The wild young student had a great respect for her teacher.

She honoured the scant folds of her worn silk dress, the gold beads about her withered neck and the lawn handkerchief pinned across her breast with a jewel-headed pin; she tried to conform to her stately notions of propriety as far as it is in the power of a breezy young sapling to be like the straightest of venerable oaks.

How much her natural refinement was increased by this auspicious intercourse cannot be estimated. Miss Mary herself could hardly have decided what was a borrowed or what an innate grace.

Annie had keen suspicions that her governess knew a great deal of that outer world over whose splendours and mysteries she often pondered in her secluded home.

If so, it was a lore which she had no mind to impart, nor could all the artless acts of the young girl draw from her reserve food upon which to feed the cravings of her curiosity; for Annie had read just enough bewitching fiction and more-bewitching poetry to aid her quick imagination in building air-castles of great magnificence, as unlike the colder realities of the selfish world as might be expected.

Walter and herself had much confidential side-talk upon topics equally interesting to both; each longed to know more of the world than was spread before them in their valley home; each had wit, vivid fancy, and quick mental perception.

They loved reading; and better still, to get by themselves in the wide chimney corner, or out in the free fields, and talk about what they had read.

As she never thought of Walter as an inferior, nor of his position in the household as one at all humiliating, she never dreamed of the bitter weeds which grew and flourished beneath the spring of sweet waters her lovely face and mind set a-gushing in his soul—weeds of discontent at his lot in life—wreaths destined, however, in course of time, to blossom into flowers of aspiration.

Walter had always been at school through the winter time, and Mr. Stuart had even sent him to the village academy for a period, to acquire a higher knowledge of mathematics and a little of the Latin grammar, so pleased was he with the boy's superior abilities.

Annie also had not failed to find in him a ready pupil when she essayed to teach him French; a favour he returned by leading her through some of the intricacies of algebra and geometry.

So that these children, in their isolated home, were not lacking in many of the best gifts. Innocent they were as the nature around them.

Never were two young hearts more tenderly and truly pledged.

From that moment until the day of his going away, Walter was like another being; all the pride and strength of manhood seemed to have blossomed in him suddenly.

His step was elate, his eyes glowing with a pure fire kindled upon some altar of resolve; and though he had never been so joyous, the thoughtfulness of a strong purpose gave him an older, graver air.

Annie's glance followed him perpetually, wondering at this new revelation of his mind, and thinking how handsome he grew every hour.

She might be pardoned for thinking him very handsome. He had fine features and the beautiful eyes of genius. That his hands were large and hard, and his cheek brown with toil, was not criticised by her. Her beloved father's were the same, and he too wore the russet coat and broad brimmed hat of the farmer.

The day of parting came swiftly. The little black leather trunk was packed with the homely wardrobe and the few precious books, and stood upon the porch speaking its mute farewell more powerfully than any other thing.

Mr. Stuart was obliged to cough before he could say

good-by. Poor Annie had wept the long hours of the night away. Walter was to take the stage which passed, thrice a week, the lane which intersected the high road a quarter of a mile away.

After embracing his "parents," as he might well call them, he shouldered his trunk, and Annie, drawing her bonnet over her face to conceal the blinding tears, walked by his side until they came to the crossing.

Here they sat down upon the trunk, hand clasped in hand, silently awaiting the rumble of wheels which seemed to both, but more especially to the girl left behind in her lonely home, as if those wheels were to pass over her heart.

They had said all that could be said sitting by the fire the night before; and now she only leaned her head against his shoulder and sobbed, while he clasped her hand convulsively, too proud to give way to his grief.

"It is the stage!—oh, Walter!"

"God bless you, Annie!"

She retreated down the lane and leaned against a gnarled oak as the dusty vehicle lumbered up, and she saw through a drowning mist, which seemed to envelope and suffocate her, her lover toss his little trunk on top, spring up beside the driver, wave his hand once and again—and then she was alone!

CHAPTER IV.

THE violets were blooming in the hollows:

The April winds were blowing
Against the willing breasts
Of the violets in the hollows.
And the robins in their nests.

Walter had been gone nearly six months. The winter had fled, drearily enough sometimes to Annie, who had a secret which her mother did not penetrate, but cheered by frequent letters, loving, earnest, glowing with satisfactory accounts of the young man's progress, and sweet with precious words, which the young girl read to herself, a hundred times over, with blushing cheek and tremulous, smiling lips. Although she had cried herself to sleep many times from sheer loneliness and pining after Walter, yet the winter, somehow, had vanished; and now that she looked back upon it it did not seem so long.

In the meantime she had been considering a plan which she found courage to propose to her parents.

"Walter," she said, "must not get so much the start of her as to come home and consider her a rustic. Might she not spend one year at some seminary, to learn a little how other girls did, and to finish her music, which she was sure needed something which Miss Mary, learned as she was, could not impart?"

Her parents, as proud of her as they were indulgent, conquered their own objections, gave up her society, concealed from her how extremely lonely they should be, and gave their consent.

The next step was to write to a sister of Mr. Stuart's—or rather a sister-in-law—a wealthy widow, to obtain her advice as to what school would be appropriate, what the expense would be, what wardrobe would be required, and other particulars.

Mrs. Stuart had heard incidentally of the rare beauty of her niece, and knew her brother-in-law to be in good circumstances, though an unpolished farmer.

Of course she recommended one of the most aristocratic of finishing schools in Brighton.

The terms, though much higher than had been anticipated by the father, were acceded to, the wardrobe was left mainly to be fitted out in London; and Annie, the unsophisticated country girl, was given up unsuspectingly by her simple-minded parents to the tender mercies of Madame, the accomplished principal.

She began her new career by a month at her aunt's, who, astonished at the accomplishments she already possessed, and delighted by her beauty and her natural air of refinement, entered heartily into the duty of preparing her for her entry amid her future elegant associates. The sum appropriated to her wardrobe, which had been considered extravagant by her parents, vanished like mist before the first rays of the sun.

She found herself the possessor of four silk dresses, two tarletan and crêpe evening robes, delaines, barbès, merinoes and school dresses, any one of the humbllest of which was more stylish than she had ever before worn, with bonnets, mantles, gloves and shoes to match; and when she entered school and found her companions similarly attired she thought no more about it.

Although urged by her aunt to spend her first vacation with her, she wrote home begging for an allowance to enable her to come to them.

She was home-sick to see them and the dear old place; beside a hope she had, though not a certainty,

of meeting Walter there, from whom she had been separated one long year.

He was not there when she reached home; but she flew to her mother and father with a joy which they received as a token of her unchanged heart.

After the first happy tears were brushed away, the childish eagerness, to the barn to greet the cows and chickens, and acted her past self over again to the delight of all.

Annie really deemed herself unchanged.

She had too much poetry in her nature not to feel the charm of the old homestead, the glory of the wood and sky, the simple luxuries of such free living.

Yet, as days passed by, the hard wooden chairs, the awkward dress and primitive manners grew distasteful. She loved her parents as much as ever, but she felt that their manner of life would not satisfy her; she should pine for other things if confined to that simple routine once so full of interest for her.

Then there came a great happiness for her—a brief visit from Walter.

His year of study had expired, he had secured a situation as clerk, and was on his way to fill it.

He could tarry but one short week.

His rapturous love of Annie was not decreased by the charms of air and dress with which she was now surrounded; but they filled his soul with a vague foreboding—a dismal, unshaped phantom of future ill, so dreary that he put it away without question as to its meaning or message.

Again he said to her, as of old:

"I shall never be worthy of you Annie."

She stopped his mouth with her pretty white hand, and laughed.

"You are handsomer than ever, Walter. Be sure I have not seen your equal amid the shallow dandies—no, indeed."

Yet, even while she was speaking, she was conscious of disparaging the scars of labour not yet worn from his hands and the sturdy symmetry of his frame.

One short week, and Walter Carey was away to a life of confinement, irksome day duty and persevering night study—another and Annie was back to her school career.

This long separation of interests, of habits of thought and feeling, this differing sphere of influences, was not best calculated to draw closer the invisible bonds holding the youthful lovers.

This Walter felt far more keenly than Annie.

Her letters to him for many months were as frequent as in the old times, and though there was in them some of the charming frivolities of her age, they were full of the impulse and uncalculating tenderness of an uncorrupted heart.

But the intuitions of a passion like his were not to be deceived.

He felt the frost gathering in the spring-time warmth of love long before it crystallized upon love's blighted flowers. Yet he would not believe even what he felt.

He clung to the purposes of his life, almost swearing in his soul that they should not be thwarted.

The fires of passion and ambition burned on, until all the extra health and vigour of his physical powers were consumed by the mental heat which gradually paled his brown cheek and toned down his over-sanguine temperament.

Annie left school, followed by flatteries sufficient to have spoiled a less excellent mind.

Her beauty and her intellectual gifts were heightened by the prestige given to them by her relationship to the influential Mrs. Stuart.

That lady made a special pet of her.

She had no daughters of her own; her two sons were married; she had a great house, which it was her pleasure to keep gay with much society; she was aware that the addition of a beautiful young creature, of whom she could have the "bringing out," to her family circle would increase its already numerous attractions, and she was resolved that her niece should spend a year with her.

When the haughty and strong-minded Mrs. Jonathan Stuart resolved anything she generally brought it about; and it is perhaps as simple a way as possible of indicating a change in the dutiful Annie, that she finally consented to leave her parents a time longer to their childless solitude.

She made them first a three months' visit, returning to her aunt in time for the winter gaieties, which were followed, in the summer season, by a tour of the watering-places, and all the common routine of buttermilk fashionableness.

A woman of so marked character as the aunt had mental force enough to imprint her views upon the yielding material of a young and gentle mind.

Annie had a natural taste for splendour. There was about her poetic temperament a certain oriental languor and indolence which made it difficult for her to resist strong influences.

THE LONDON READER.

It is not necessary to depict the gradual change—but there came a time when, in despite of the promise made beneath the chestnut tree, Walter Carey received no more letters from Annie Stuart.

CHAPTER V

MRS. JONATHAN STUART WAS AS HAPPY AS IT IS proper for exclusive people to be.

She had brought about an engagement between her niece and Mr. Marchford; which did not need much match-making talent so far as the gentleman was concerned, for he was as fatally enamoured of the beautiful girl the first time he met her as it is usual for men of fifty to be when they are enamoured still.

Annie had the very qualities he most admired; not only rare beauty of face and form, but a calmness of manner, a self-poised dignity, with a childish purity of expression—the very woman to wear the honours of the Marchfords imperially.

It was a brilliant match—a very brilliant match for Annie—and a brilliant match for Mr. Marchford also.

Both families were satisfied.

And now Mrs. Stuart was in the hey-day and gorgious carnival of preparation.

She was bound, herself, to lavish all she could afford upon the trousseau and all the celebrations attendant upon the ceremony.

The presents from the wealthy relatives were profuse and keeping; and the bridegroom was munificence and magnificence itself.

Age is even more impetuous than youth. The engagement was to be a brief one; Annie was in a sort of maze of lace, love, diamonds, endearments, fancy and flowers. Closely following upon the letter to her parents announcing her engagement and asking their approval thereof, came another saying that the marriage-day was set. There was to be no visit home first, as the pining parents had hoped; but they were to come to the wedding, and afterwards to return to their solitary home, giving up their darling to her new-found friends. The statement of the bridegroom's immense wealth and high position was but little solace to them.

Mr. Marchford was really in love, as far as a Marchford could be. They were a cold and self-esteeming family, not given to much worship of others. He thought Annie the most beautiful woman he had ever known, and he was proud, also, of her wit. He had waited a great many years to make his choice, and now he was more than satisfied with it.

And Annie? She knew perfectly well that she did not love the man she was about to marry. She liked his relatives, esteemed him, stood a little in awe of his stately moods, and was not repulsed by his habits or manners—that was all. She had grown to believe that people could be very happy without love, where there was respect, propriety and plenty of money. Her girlish dreams were put away. She could smile with the most worldly at faith in such things as deathless devotion, love in a cottage, happiness of simple hearts in each other; these things were dreams—the realities of life were such as she grasped now. She could count them—count her dresses, reckon up her jewels, set a price upon endearments paid for so lavishly.

It was charming, the pretty bridesmaids declared it to be!

They regarded their lovely mistress as the most fortunate of all the feminine race. Such gloves and bouquets, and such a bridal veil—should they ever reach such a perfection of happiness?

Bright chattering birds, reared in the conservatories of fashion, doubtless there were wells of music yet unbound in their fluttered bosoms, which, if stricken by the true divining-rod, might gush forth in immortal melody, despite their conventional notes; but they were unconscious of them then.

They chirruped only such pretty opera airs as might fascinate the well-bred grooms們 they were so happy as to be associated with upon this important occasion.

And now we are back to where Mr. Marchford sat by all betrothed, wondering at her pre-occupied manner, only two nights before the bridal.

The bridesmaids fluttered and hummed in the chamber above, and there was a soft clash of silver and china in the tea-room; the chandeliers flooded the drawing-rooms with light—only the bride seemed quiet and listless.

"I am afraid my beloved is not happy to-night," again said the low voice of the lover.

"Happy?"—what a start—"Oh, yes, very happy. It would be curious if I were not. But you know I am expecting my parents to-night—they should have been here yesterday—and I have not seen them for so long. I shall be so glad to see them; and so grieved, too, to feel that I am about to leave them. Do you wonder I am a little grave?"

"No, no, darling; I honour you for it. You are always right, whatever you do or feel, Annie. But you must not grieve for your parents. They shall not lose their daughter, but rather, gain a son. If they are lonely without you in their old home, they shall live with us. Why not? I love them although I have not seen them, for they gave me you."

"But my father and mother are old-fashioned people, Mr. Marchford—you would hardly guess how primitive and old-fashioned; they could hardly in their old age, get used to our ways, I fear."

"Neither need they try. We will preserve to them, as far as possible, their habits and tastes. I shall study their happiness, dearest, if only to make you more content."

"You are very good," said Annie, the tears starting to her eyes. "Hark! Is not that a carriage—ah, yes? they are here!"

Before the dignified footman could open the door, Annie reached it, and threw herself into her parents' arms.

The farmer and his wife presented a quaint contrast as they stood in the glow of gaslight, with the dew of glistening on their cheeks.

Their clothing was of fine material, for they did not intend to put their daughter to the blush, but it was of an antique style, which gave yet more character to their simple manners.

Mr. Marchford stood respectfully aside while Annie gave expression to the outburst of feeling which overcame her upon meeting those beloved faces again. He had time for criticism.

He saw they were people not lacking in refinement nor native graces, however antiquated they might be. He admired the placid bloom of the handsome matron, and the easy, natural pride of the sturdy farmer, and came to the conclusion that it would not be difficult to receive them with the deference to which they were entitled.

Annie presented her parents with a mixture of pride and tenderness, doing more honour to her heart than any other of her late actions; and they could find no fault, certainly, with the impressive respect paid to them by their future son-in-laws.

Yet Annie was aware of the mournful look, more touching than words or tears, which darkened in her mother's eyes as they turned from the calm, slightly-wrinkled features of the lover of fifty to the young, glowing, lovely face of her only child.

She knew by intuition what that shadow foreboded, and the light laugh with which she dashed aside her emotions did not prevent the arrow from striking home.

It was a chatty, brilliant group assembled around the tea-table that evening.

Mrs. Jonathan Stuart presided with her usual grace. Mr. Marchford was cordial, Annie was restlessly gay, the girls were brimming with excitement and spirit; and in the midst of this brightness, the travel-weary guests glowed like one of Rembrandt's pictures, rich and grave.

Both mother and daughter were glad when it was over and they could be alone together, as their hearts craved.

Excusing themselves from other claims, they sought Annie's chamber, where she made her mother recline upon the couch, while she sat beside her, clasping her hand.

"How do you like him, mother?"

She had not meant to ask the question, but it escaped her lips, impelled by that unquiet mood of hers.

"How can I judge him so soon, my daughter? He looks kind and good; and he is a gentleman. Your own heart must answer you whether you feel that he is fitted to make your highest happiness. I hope you have chosen wisely, Annie. The world, surely, can find no fault, unless it be in the disparity of your ages. But your heart—if that is satisfied, all is well. God grant it, my child."

The sigh with which she ended told of an unspoken fear.

"I wish you were not so tired, mother. I'd like to show you the wedding-dress, and the jewels Mr. Marchford gave me only to-day. Aunt is very generous; she ordered three dresses from Paris for me, besides the veil and laces. They are beauties. But there will be time to-morrow. They say I will have the handsomest outfit of any bride this season, by far."

Mrs. Stuart made no reply to this; she was thinking of something else. Presently she raised her eyes and inquired:

"Have you asked Walter to the wedding, Annie?" A burning blush swept over the face before her and as suddenly receded; the hand clasping hers was spasmodically withdrawn.

"No, mother, I would have asked him, but I did not know where to write. You told me he had left where he has been living."

"Is it possible that you and Walter have become

such strangers to each other, as to lose sight of one another in this way? Why, you used to be brother and sister. I should about as soon give up my own child as Walter. He's always been very dear to us."

There was a few moments' silence, and then Mrs. Stuart went on, in a lower voice:

"Do you know, Annie, it used to be one of my pleasantest day-dreams that when you children were grown up, you would fall in love with each other, and so marry and live on the old farm, and be always with us? Perhaps it was selfish of me; but Walter was a noble boy. I have never seen his equal. There may be others more polished, but none for whom heaven has done more. And it would have been pleasant to have had the old homestead kept in the family, and to have seen your children playing where you yourself used to frolic such a little time ago. Ah! Annie, it is well for us, perhaps, that our dreams are so seldom verified. We should be loath to leave this life if we could arrange it to suit ourselves. But that was a pleasant dream—a pleasant dream!"

The musing tone melted away in a half sigh.

The speaker sat with closed eyes, dreaming that dream over again, mayhap, hopeless as it now was, when she was startled by a sob—a heavy sob, which convulsed the throat and bosom of Annie.

"Oh, mother!" and with a cry, as from an anguish long repressed, the young girl threw herself in her mother's arms, burying her face in the breast, trust and tenderest of all the world to her, and lay many minutes, sobbing, giving full sway to some emotion which, having once obtained the mastery, refused now to go back to the chain which it had rent in pieces.

CHAPTER VI

"It's a hopeless task in this great city, wife; we haven't the least clue to his whereabouts. He may not even be in town now."

"It was only yesterday he delivered the package—it's for Annie's sake I wish you to try, David," pleaded Mrs. Stuart.

"It's a pretty time to be getting up such a business as this; the day before the wedding."

The father spoke savagely, for so placid a man.

"I know it, dear husband. Annie has been foolish and wicked. But she did not know her own heart; she scarcely knows it now. I am her mother, and I know it better than she herself. She loves Walter, and she does not love Mr. Marchford. I cannot endure to see this wedding go on, David; indeed I cannot. It will be the misery of our child, I know. Oh, David, what are fine clothes, jewellery, and money compared with a heart like Walter's? What are riches compared with love?"

"The match wasn't of our making, wife."

"No, and it shall not be of our breaking. It's only necessary to bring them together, and they'll settle the matter for themselves. Of course it will be disagreeable, seeing affairs have gone so far, but better than ruining two young souls, for it will about come to that. If Annie marries the man she is engaged to she will go on in worldliness and vanity until there's no telling where it will end. I can't see her in such a state."

"We need not take the responsibility of it; she wasn't brought up so; and if she chooses to go against the grain of her bringing up, why, let her—that's all."

"No, it isn't all, David. We're her parents still. Besides, there's Walter—poor boy!"

"Well, well; anything but seeing you cry, wife. I can't stand that. I'll start out to please you. But don't allow yourself to expect that I'll be successful."

The farmer buttoned up his coat with a surly air. His temper was touched, it was evident—or his heart, maybe, and he concealed it by irritability of manner. His good wife—the partner of so many years—understood him thoroughly; she followed him down to the door, giving his hand an encouraging pressure at parting.

She could not avoid standing a moment on the marble steps looking after him, to the surprise of the formal footman, as her husband strode away.

Then she returned to the chamber where Annie and her attendant troupe were busy at their important work.

The young maidens loved the comely face and genial manner of her mother, quaint though they were, and clustered about her like so many bees laden with honey, showing her their treasures.

She was obliged to give her advice in every matter, however trivial.

But in the midst of all that bewilderment of gauzy frounces, floating tissues, perfumes, silk, and bijouterie, her anxious eye saw little but the pale, composed face of her daughter, who had arisen, after the storming thunder-gust of last night's sorrow and confession, as clear and cool as a fair morning after a tempest.

No one about them guessed what lay deepest in the thoughts of the two.

In the meantime, as the busy hours fled on, Farmer Stuart went from one hotel to another in search of Walter Carey.

When, faint, desponding, and dinnerless, as night closed around him, he grew tired of pursuing his object, and his exhausted energies moved him to seek the stately residence of his sister-in-law.

As he approached the mansion, he became conscious of some one standing in the twilight, watching the windows.

At first he supposed it to be a policeman on his beat; but as the shadow glided away at the sound of his approaching steps, something familiar in the form and motion revealed to him who it was.

"Walter!" he cried, turning and hastening after him.

The shadow hurried on.

"Walter, my boy," and the farmer broke into a run; "you don't escape me in this manner, my boy, after I have had eight hours' tramp in search of you;" and the heavy hand of Mr. Stuart came down on the shoulder of Walter Carey. "Didn't you know me, eh?"

"How do you do, Mr. Stuart? I didn't know it was you, of course. I'm very glad to see you."

"You look as though you were—very happy, indeed. You're getting thin, my boy; what's the matter with you? Have you been in the house to see your mother and Annie?"

"No, I was not in," was the hesitating reply. "I chanced to be passing—that was all. I haven't the entrance of Mrs. Jonathan Stuart's mansion."

"Not so naughty, my boy. I've tired myself out looking for you; your mother sent me to try and find you, with full faith that a needle might be found in a haystack; and so, sure enough, it has been. There's nothing like the faith of these women. If they want a thing very much, they believe they'll get it on that account. So, come on; my wife will be alarmed about us, long before this."

"Excuse me, Mr. Stuart. I want to see you and your beloved wife very much, but not there. No, no; I will not go in."

"But you must. Your mother has sent for you."

"Mother!" cried the young man; "why do you mock me with that word? You know I never had a mother, nor never shall have."

"Has not my wife been a mother to you, Walter?"

"She has—she has—more than a mother! Believe me, I am not ungrateful, Mr. Stuart—neither to you nor her. I only ask to be excused from going in that house to-night. I have my reasons, although I cannot give them."

"Annie wants to see you, Walter."

For an instant the young man's lip trembled; his companion was watching his face by the lamp-light.

"Did she say so?"

"Her mother bid me tell you so."

"She can have but one reason for wishing to see me—the desire to show me her triumph," answered the young man coldly.

"Well, well, I cannot say. Her mother thinks differently. Will you come to the wedding to-morrow?"

"At what hour?"

"At noon. Where are you stopping?"

"I came here to transact some business with a firm with which our house is connected. My stopping place is at the Blank Hotel, in C— Street."

"About the only place I didn't go to this day. Well, if you won't go in I'll tell my wife so. It's no business of mine. If you won't come to see us why we must come to see you, I suppose, before we go back. Take care of yourself, my boy."

He wrung Walter's hand, and the two parted. The family were at tea when he entered the house.

"I have found him, but he's obstinate," he whispered in answer to his wife's look of inquiry, as he placed himself by her side at the table.

An hour later, Annie's mother came to her, where she was standing alone in the conservatory, looking at some roses, as if to see if they would be in bloom or to-morrow's festivities.

"Your father saw Walter this evening."

"Did he? What of that?"

"He was standing in front of this house, watching your window."

"A doubtful occupation."

But the young girl could not conceal the quiver of her voice.

"Your father says he has changed very much."

No answer.

"That he looks as if he had been sick."

"Mother, Mr. Marchford has come; I must go to him."

"Annie, I'm going this evening to see Walter. Do you care to go?"

"Oh mother! why do you ask me such a question?

Is not this the eleventh hour? It is too late—too late! Do not try me."

"Act just as your heart dictates. Your father has gone to order a carriage, to take us to see my dear Walter, since he will not come to see me."

"Annie! Annie! What has become of you? Mr. Marchford has brought the wedding bouquets. He saw to their making up himself."

The young girl turned hurriedly, and went forth to the expectant group, gathered about the beautiful flowers.

Mr. Marchford's hand caught hers, as she came to his side.

"They are pale in their very bloom and splendour, Annie; they are very much like the bride who is to wear them."

"Am I pale to-night?" with a soft laugh.

"Yes, Annie, but as lovely as these roses."

She smiled, a strange, joyless smile.

"Come apart from the crowd, Annie. I want you to myself a few moments this last evening, before I hope to have you with me always. Sit upon this sofa. You look weary. Was that a carriage driving away from the door?"

"Yes. My mother has gone out. Is it late?"

"Nine o'clock, just. I am glad it is nine o'clock. I do not care how brief this day may prove, dearest."

"Perhaps, by to-morrow you will wish it were to-day again."

"Do you wish to make me say extravagant things, Annie?"

"Mr. Marchford, will you come into the conservatory? There is no one there, and I would like to say a few words to you."

She was deadly pale.

He saw it, and followed her, wondering if this were a peculiarity of the sex, to look so white and take whims, at times when a different conduct might reasonably be expected of them.

He was too content to feel critical.

He only thought Annie must be like all other beautiful young women who were about to be married. What passed between them was known only to themselves.

When they reappeared, Mr. Marchford looked cold and troubled, and went away immediately, while Annie seemed to have been weeping.

From the result, she must have had a severe struggle, and, indeed she looked like one who had passed through a crisis of her life—a severe struggle, not with herself only, but against the stern, inexorable Marchford pride, which was stamped in iron upon every feature of her companion's face at their parting.

If she felt contrition and remorse for her own weakness, which had inflicted pain and disappointment upon an honourable man, it must have been lightened by perceiving that his grief was hardly equal to his sense of the absurdity of the affair.

His pride revolted at the picture of gossip-breeding newspaper paragraphs creating excitement, which must follow.

The Marchfords did not like being placed at the mercy of the multitude.

Notwithstanding, at high noon of the following day the bridal anthem was not pealed from the organ of St. George's Church; that wonderful Parisian veil was not worn by a blushing bride to heighten the charms it would not conceal; the bridesmaids were disappointed of their pleasant duty, and their fleecy flounces fluttered not upon perfumed airs.

The roses withered in solitude, instead of dying a happy death upon warm bosoms and in fragrant curvets.

While Mrs. Jonathan Stuart, burying her anger and mortification in her own chamber, refused herself to all visitors, and the Marchfords gave but haughty replies to the few who dare to question, Annie, pale, weeping, and closely veiled, was riding home between her parents, in the most secluded modest way, instead of being borne off by a triumphant husband upon her bridal tour.

Her soul, like a sea the day after a storm, was inwardly at peace, though outwardly the waves were still a little troubled; while her parents felt like persons who have recovered a lost treasure.

Never had they taken such heart-felt satisfaction in their beloved child, as upon that day, and she, having given up so much else, clung to them the more closely.

The opals and diamonds, the wedding gift of the man she had deserted, were left with the rest of his splendid presents and the unworn finery of the occasion to be returned to those who had given them; but she regretted nothing, for about her throat was a silken cord, and against her bosom lay a golden heart, the most precious of all the bridal presents.

She had not seen Walter; she had only resolved that whether they ever met again or not, henceforth she should live true to her real womanhood.

Never was the old homestead more beautiful to her eyes. Never did she find it more full of innocent

charms and thrilling associations than when she returned to it thus with her parents.

The love, child-like beauty, poetry, and religion of her nature bloomed anew with a vigorous and healthy bloom.

She wore Walter's betrothal present as a talisman with magical results.

Who doubts that in the not very distant future the dream of the fond mother was realized, and that she is growing old in the sunshine of her children's presence?

Those who doubt must imagine Walter Carey far more implacable than the result would justify.

M. E. F.

THE SWEETS OF HOME.

Tis morning, and the glorious sunbeams spread
In soft and tranquil beauty all around;
I care not now where fortune casts my lot,
She cannot rob me of free nature's grace.

THERE is no trait, perhaps, more amiable in the human character than the attachment which each individual feels for the sweets of his native home.

When separated from kindred and from friends, he sighs in a far distant land from the place of his birth, with what restless, tender, and soul-subduing influence does the remembrance of past scenes and pleasures rush upon his mind. His native hills, woods and valleys, the bubbling brooks and rippling streams, the groves, the meadows, and the daisy-clad fields, which witnessed the innocence and sportings of his youthful years, arise before his imagination, arrayed in all their beauty.

The aged man looks back with tender affection to the sacred spot where repose the slumbering ashes of his departed kindred. In lonely and pious meditation he feels pleasurable melancholy steal over his soul, which he would not exchange for all the sparkling joys of transient and unsubstantial amusement.

But awakening from his pleasing reveries, he finds that he is in a distant country. In vain he looks around for the friends and companions of his youth—but, alas! all is sad, lonely, and disconsolate. Tell him not that the breezes which fan him are perfumed with odours, that the gentle zephyr brings health and balm on its wings, that roses and jessamines fill the soft air with fragrance, and that the radiant mantle of nature is spangled with flowers of the richest dyes.

To him the whispers of domestic love, tenderness and affection, are more grateful and soothing than all the treasures of life besides. His thoughts turn to the valued friends he has left behind him, and many near and dear he may never see again.

J. A.

Two schoolboys recently quarrelled at their academy near Darmstadt, and resolved to settle the matter according to the code of honour; but as they could only get hold of one pistol they accordingly drew lots. Luckily, though touched by the ball, the one who stood fire first was but slightly injured. These lad's ages are respectively eleven and thirteen.

At the commencement of the sixteenth century, the population of the French capital amounted to only 100,000. In about 200 years later—that is, in the year 1708—Paris contained 500,000 souls, the population having more than quadrupled within two centuries. Since that period a vast increase has taken place, Paris in 1865 containing 1,667,841 inhabitants.

THE MANGLE IN OPERATION.—The mangle in undoubtedly the most perfect and expensive machine of the kind ever made. The bottom and upper plates are of solid glass; the former is 7 ft. in length, 3 ft. 9 in. in width, and seven-eighths of an inch in thickness, and it rests upon a slate bed. Some idea of the duty it has to perform may be gathered from the fact that when the Queen is at Windsor, twenty-four baskets, averaging 150 lb. each, are sent to the laundry daily, or 3,600 lb., equal to a ton and a half of solid linen.

THE STOCKHOLM EXHIBITION.—The buildings for the Industrial exhibition are in wood and glass, and originally covered a space of 70,000 square feet, but it was found that this space would be quite insufficient for the intended purpose, and the committee has determined to increase it to 100,000 or 120,000 feet. The productions of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland are generally the only ones to be admitted, but the central committee have been authorised to admit contributions from other countries, in case that space and circumstances permit.

MUSICAL EDUCATION IN PARIS.—The municipal authorities of Paris are using great efforts to make singing an integral portion of the education of the people, as it is in many parts of Germany. The establishment of singing classes, both for children and adults, in all the commercial schools of the capital has been before mentioned, and an attempt has now been made to give character and tone to what is

taught there. A competition is opened for choral compositions, to be executed by the pupils of the primary schools, and the classes of adults in the city. The pieces are to be written for three or four voices, without accompaniment, and a jury named by the prefect will award the prizes. The choice of the words is also left to the composers, but they must, of course, be in accordance with the object in view. The number of pieces to be unlimited, and a prize of 300 to 500 francs, according to merit, will be awarded to each composition accepted, the copyright of the successful pieces to be the property of the municipal authorities. There is no doubt that the appeal will produce a perfect flood of compositions, although the prizes are not large, the amount of musical talent unemployed being enormous. Choral harmonies of this kind have not been much cultivated in France, and this proposition of the Prefecture may have the effect of turning the attention of some young composers to music of a sounder, though less pretentious, character than that generally in vogue.

VALUABLE TIMBER.

AMONGST trees little known, but producing valuable timber, may be mentioned the itch-wood tree (*Oncocarpus Vitensis*), of the Fiji Islands and New Caledonia. Though producing wood valuable for building purposes, the tree is better known for its highly dangerous properties when in a living state. It secretes a deadly milky sap, a single drop of which, should it happen to fall on the hands or face, is said by Dr. Seemann, in his "Flora Vitensis," to produce a pain equal to that caused by contact with a red-hot poker. The natives are well acquainted with the dangerous properties of the juice, and use it as a poison. If the tree is simply touched, it produces eruptions of the skin.

The following extract from a letter directed to the British Consul, by Mr. Egerström, gives a good idea of the nature of this tree: he peeled off the bark of a specimen himself (not knowing the tree), and proposing to use the spar as a flagstaff, he says:

"In the evening I was troubled with considerable itching about my legs, and every part of my body which had come in contact with the spar. All the parts affected became red and inflamed, breaking out in innumerable pustules, which emitted a yellowish matter, with a nauseous smell. The itching was exceedingly painful and irritating, and my arms having been bare when operating upon the tree, also became inflamed and broke out as already described. The neighbouring natives, who came to watch my proceedings, now warned me, too late, not to touch the tree, as it was a poisonous one, and advised my keeping quiet, and not to touch or scratch the parts inflamed. This advice, however, I could not follow, the irritation for several days being excessive. I employed no remedy, but bathed daily, as usual, in fresh water, although advised to the contrary, and did not get rid of the injurious effects of the itch-wood for nearly two months."

A remedy for the dangerous eruptions is said to consist of charcoal reduced to powder, and thickly applied to the parts affected, effecting a cure in twelve or fifteen days.

The tree has a green bark, and attains a height of sixty feet, and a girth of two feet or three feet, the wood being white and easy to work. The properties of the tree appear to be very similar to the milk mushrooms so extremely common in this country.

One drop of the milky juice secreted by some of these species will occasion a sharp smart like the sting of a nettle, particularly on delicate skins, whilst a drop placed on the tongue is so extremely acid and fiery, as to cause severe pain and inconvenience for many hours.

A LARGE VINE.—On the seacoast, midway between Tyre and Sidon, is a very ancient mulberry garden, surrounded by enormous olive trees, whose hollow trunks attest their great antiquity. By the garden side stands a cool fountain, fed by one of the mountain streams, so welcome to the traveller for his noon-day rest when travelling through that thirsty land. After resting awhile at this pleasant spot, we rambled through the garden of mulberry trees, partly for the sake of taking the fruit, but more with the intent of learning something about the rearing of silkworms, which were there in full operation. Whilst admiring the great size of the fine old mulberry trees, I happened to notice the bark of a tree which appeared so vine-like in its character that I stopped to examine it, and, to my surprise, found that it was really a vine of most enormous dimensions; it rose by two main stems, and fairly rested upon six or eight of the large mulberry trees around. I measured the two stems a few inches above the ground; the larger one was 50½ inches in circumference, the smaller 40 inches. I endeavoured to

trace out the area covered by its branches, but could not obtain an exact measurement, for the branches had rambled most irregularly. It had a splendid crop of very large bunches of grapes then, but in an early stage of growth, and I was told that it is a black variety. My impression is that it is one of the largest vines in the world, and it would repay a visit to Ein-el-Kanerah, for that is the name of the spot, if it be sought for by any of your readers, whose rambling propensities may carry them along that seashore.—W. W.

THE BOHEMIAN.

CHAPTER VII.

ANOTHER stormy, boisterous day.

At an early hour in the morning Arnard St. Hubert, Leopold de Courcy, and Paul de Courcy were taken from their dungeon heavily ironed, and conveyed to the place where a court was in session. And such a court!

As the prisoners cast their eyes over the assembly, they thought they had never before beheld anything so repulsive.

Gabriel Dracon occupied the president's chair, and close behind him sat Gaspard Coppin, while around, some sitting, some standing, were gaunt, ill-shaped forms, dirty, and raggedly clad, with faces ugly and cadaverous.

It was a hungry crew, and the sunken, bloodshot eyes burned with unwonted fire as the new victims were led in.

The name of Arnard St. Hubert was called, and the marquis was assisted to his feet.

"Arnard St. Hubert," said Dracon, "you stand before our court charged with being an enemy to the Convention. What have you to say to that?"

"I would ask to see my accusers," answered the prisoner.

"I accuse you first," pursued Dracon.

"Do you act as judge and accuser both?"

"In this court, sir, we sit only at justice, and all forms calculated to impede our progress towards the finding of truth are set aside. In the courts of the old aristocracy justice was but a spectre. The poor man was sure to be condemned almost without a hearing, while the rich man, let the evidence be never so conclusive, was as sure to go free. But things are somewhat changed under the government of the Convention. The people are now the rulers, and no respect is paid to rank or station. I charge you, Arnard St. Hubert, with having fled from Chatillon, and I furthermore charge that you intended to fly from France. Can you deny this?"

"No."

"And why were you thus fleeing?"

"I left my dwelling, as I supposed any citizen had a right to do—for the purpose of visiting friends in another section."

"Did you have the proper passports to enable you properly to leave the country?"

"No."

"Then you fled because you were afraid to remain here!"

St. Hubert made no reply to this.

"John Duval!"

It was one of St. Hubert's own servants who was thus summoned, a dumpy, coarse-haired fellow, who had been employed in the stables.

"John Duval, did you ever hear your master say anything against the Convention?"

The witness replied that he had; and then in a clumsy, stupid manner, he went on to say that he heard the "prisoner curse Robespierre and Danton and Marat, and that he had also heard him speak very angrily of the whole mass of the common people."

"What say you to this?" demanded Dracon.

"I can only say that it is false," replied the marquis. "I have never spoken such words; and even had I been so tempted you should know that I would not have spoken them before my servants."

"If the testimony of John Duval is not enough, let me add mine."

The deep, harsh voice sounded familiar, and as the prisoner looked around, he beheld the tall, gaunt form of Goliath, the Bohemian, approaching the judge's stand.

His garb seemed more tattered and soiled, and his deeply pitted face more repulsive, than when our friends saw him at the Abbey of St. Julien.

"My citizen brothers," he continued, bowing first to Dracon, and then looking round upon the assembly, "what I have to say I must say of all three of the prisoners. I met them at the Abbey of St. Julien, and I heard them denounce your honourable government in most unmeasured terms. They claimed that they were fleeing from tyrants and murderers. But this is not all. I have known them before, and I

know them to be aristocrats of the most violent stamp. They are royalists, and would to-day, if they had the power, restore a wicked king to the throne of France. And thus do I accuse them. Let the guillotine have its due in the heads of these three traitors!"

A murmur of applause ran through the assembly, and a hundred voices called:

"To the guillotine! To the guillotine!"

Arnard St. Hubert was allowed to sit down, but neither of his companions was called up.

"We need no more evidence," said Dracon. "What implicates one implicates all. Let the prisoners be taken back to their dungeon, and when we want them again, we shall know where to find them."

"To the guillotine! To the guillotine!" cried the rabble.

"Not to-day!" returned the president; "not these men to-day. We have others whose turns will come this afternoon. To-morrow you shall see these three heads fall!"

The prisoners had nothing to say.

They knew that their fates were sealed, and that any protestations or prayers on their part would be simply useless.

They were in the hands of a power that knew no mercy—a demoniac power—the chief aim and ambition of which was to destroy human life.

"Morbleu!" cried the Bohemian, as the prisoners were being led from the box. "I should like to swing the axe over the heads of those sleek-skinned aristocrats! I think I could almost shame the guillotine. Look at their white hands, and their delicate faces. Ma foi! what are such men good for?"

The sentiments of Goliath were eagerly caught up by the motley crowd, and but for the interposition of the soldiers, personal violence would have been offered to the prisoners.

But after a while a passage was made through the crowd, and they were led back to their prison.

As soon as the business of the court was over, the people took their way to the square in which the guillotine was set up, where they sat themselves down upon the banks and hedges to wait the coming of that day's victims.

There were men, women, and children; poverty-stricken, ragged, dirty, and hungry, some with their work of sewing and knitting and some without.

The men were eager to see the heads fall, but they were not more eager than were the women. The latter, tiger-like and vindictive, who had reared their children in toil and suffering, envying for years the favoured little ones of the rich and powerful, now gloated over the sufferings of those whose social positions had afforded them, by contrast, a realization of their own state of debasement and degradation.

The men swore the loudest, but the women said the most bitter things. The men cried out the most vociferously when the victims appeared, but the women crowded nearest to the guillotine.

The men forgot how many heads had fallen in Chatillon, but the women kept an exact account. The *citoyenne* Buchard, wife of the aubergiste, carried a little book and a pencil in her pocket, and she had a mark made for every blow of the guillotine.

Shortly after noon carts were seen approaching from the prison. The women left their seats under the shelter of the walls, and gathered as close to the guillotine as the soldiers would permit; while the men, howling and hooting, formed a dense circle outside.

There were six victims—two middle-aged men, one youth, one woman, and two young girls. They were a mother and her daughters. They were from Etay, and had been convicted of speaking disrespectfully of the Convention, and of having in their possession a painted portrait of Louis XVI.

Madame Buchard made six new marks in her book, and then the crowd dispersed.

"We'll have more to-morrow," said the wife of a chiffoiner, rubbing her hands gleefully.

"Yes," replied she with the book; "and they'll be real aristocrats, too. *Parbleu!* I shall love to see their heads fall, for they've been carried very high."

Early in the evening the marquis and his two companions were visited by a man who brought them their supper. He was a surly looking fellow, but still St. Hubert ventured to address him.

"Citizen, can you answer me a question?"

"That depends upon what sort of a question you ask."

"Can I see Gabriel Dracon?"

"Not to-night."

"Do you know if final sentence has been passed upon us?"

"Of course it has."

"And we are to be executed to-morrow?"

"Yes."

"There have been some executions to-day?"

"Yes. Six heads fell this afternoon, and the un-

fortunate creatures weren't half so guilty as you have been."

"If this is to be our last night on earth, can we not be allowed the benefit of a priest?"

"*Mordieu!* no! You had benefit enough of priests at St. Francis. If you must pray, you had better pray for each other."

The Jacobin had turned and reached the door, when St. Hubert called him back.

"Is not Dracon in Chatillon?"

"I don't know. I only know that he won't be at the prison to-night."

"Can you tell me of my child—of my daughter?"

"She's safe enough."

"Is she in this prison?"

"That is more than I can tell you. She isn't under my charge."

"Has there been any accusation made against her?"

"Not that I know of. I don't belong to the court. I only know when prisoners have been condemned, as you have been."

The marquis had no more questions to ask, and the turnkey left the dungeon, bolting and locking the triple door after him.

"The end is nigh at hand," said De Courcy.

"Yes," responded St. Hubert. "There can be no escape. But I do not feel as you feel. If Cora were here—if she were to die with us—I could feel almost content. But, alas! I must leave her to a terrible fate!"

"How?" cried Paul, who had been sitting with his head bowed upon his hands. "To what fate is Cora to be left?"

St. Hubert had not the heart to tell the youth the whole truth. He could not bring himself to tell what had once passed between himself and Dracon; so he simply replied:

"Why should you ask that question, Paul? Who will befriend her when we are gone?"

"Heaven have mercy!"

And with this ejaculation, our hero again bowed his head.

"Come, come!" exclaimed the marquis, with a strong effort; "let us not pass the few remaining hours of life in useless repining. Let me, who am to suffer most, set the example. Let us eat; and while we eat, we will be thankful that our hands are not stained with blood."

Leopold de Courcy started as though a serpent had stung him, and instinctively he clutched his hands within the folds of his doublet.

"Mercy! What now, Leopold?" asked St. Hubert, in amazement.

"Oh, this is horrible!" groaned De Courcy, sinking down upon a stool, and clasping his hands before his face.

For some little time the marquis gazed upon his friend in silence.

At length he arose and laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"Leopold, you act strangely. What is it that moves you so? It must be something of the old cause—something of that which has kept you from me so long. Come, come! This is our last night of life, and I ask you, before we die, to trust me with your secret."

"Let us eat first," cried De Courcy, starting up and shaking himself. "Perhaps you suspect too much. But—but—but let us eat now."

The coarse food was disposed of, and by the time they had laid the empty wooden tray upon the floor, the last ray of daylight had gone, and the prisoners were left in total darkness.

There was no bed in the cell—no pallet of any kind.

Leopold de Courcy crept away into a corner, and lay down upon the hard stones. Paul reclined against the wall not far from him; and the marquis, when he found his companions silent, sat down and was soon dozing and dreaming. The first dream that visited him was of the Bohemian; the second was of the Bohemian; and the third was of the Bohemian.

From this last dream he started to his feet, and began to pace the narrow cell; but he quickly discovered that he was not alone in his unrest. He heard a light footfall directly before him, and presently he found himself in contact with a body like his own.

"Leopold, is this you?"

"Yes. I cannot sleep."

"Neither can I sleep," returned St. Hubert. "I have been dreaming of that Bohemian."

"And you dreamed that he was a demon?"

"No. Quite the contrary."

"That is strange. I, too, have been dreaming of him; and I dreamed that he was, like us, a fugitive from the butchers. I thought he came to me with his head in his hands. He was just from the guillotine, where his headless trunk had been left upon the scaffold for the night. I put his head back in its proper place for him, and he then offered to lead me

away from danger. He wore a smile upon his countenance, and I did not fear to trust him."

"Still," said the marquis, "our dreams cannot alter stern facts. Goliath is most assuredly our enemy, and he spoke most falsely against us."

"That is so," replied De Courcy; "and I have been trying to call the strange man back to mind. The more I think of him, the more I am convinced that I have not only seen him before, but that in some far-off time he has directly crossed my path."

"So I have been thinking," said the marquis; "for my dream brought him more distinctly to memory than did his bodily presence. But we will think no more of him. We shall probably never see him again. Let us talk of something else. Why will you not now tell me the secret of which we were speaking this evening?"

"It would not interest you, Arnaud."

"Will you allow me to be judge of that? Come—I know that you have something upon your mind that troubles you."

De Courcy turned away, and leaned for a while against the wall.

"St. Hubert," he finally said, "let me get close to your ear, for Paul must not hear what I have to say."

"Whisper as low as you please, Leopold. It is very silent and quiet here."

De Courcy had commenced to speak, when he suddenly stopped, and bent his ear in another direction.

"Hark! Paul is stirring."

"No," said the marquis. "That step is in the passage outside. Some one is approaching our cell."

"It cannot be day yet."

"Certainly not. It is not much after midnight."

Presently the bolts were carefully drawn, the bars removed, and the door slowly opened. A dim, uncertain light partially broke the gloom, and the prisoners saw that a human form stood in the open doorway.

"Is Arnaud St. Hubert here?" came in a low whisper from the lips of the dim presence.

"Yes," answered the marquis.

"And is Leopold de Courcy here?"

"Yes."

"And Paul de Courcy?"

"I am here," responded our hero, who had been aroused by the drawing of the bolts.

"All right!" and thus speaking the man entered the cell, and removed the hood from his lantern.

The three prisoners uttered a simultaneous cry of amazement, for in this strange visitor they recognized Goliath the Bohemian.

"Hush!" spoke Goliath. "We have no time for explanations here. Trust me, and I will lead you out from danger if it is in the power of man to do it. Think not hard of me because I appeared against you in court. It was the only way in which I could gain the confidence of the villains who had determined beforehand to kill you."

"Good Goliath," cried St. Hubert, seizing the Bohemian's hand, "I am not afraid to trust you."

"Nor am I," added De Courcy. "But can you lead us out from this prison?"

"I think so."

"Are there no guards?"

"Plenty of them; but they have been attended to. In Spain I learned how to prepare *drao—drao* for beasts, and *drao* for man. The Jacobin guards will be very likely to sleep soundly until morning. If they do not, then there must be a dread failure in that which has never failed the Zincale yet. Come, take your shoes in your hands and follow me. Move cautiously, and keep your mouths closed, and your eyes open."

Without further words, and without hesitation, the prisoners followed their guide from the cell; but when they had gained the passage St. Hubert caught him by the arm and stopped him.

"One word, Goliath. Oh, tell me of my child. Where is she? Will she go with us?"

"Not to-night. But keep up a hopeful heart."

"She is in the prison?"

"No. She was removed this evening. But she has friends very near to her. Jacques and Maurice are on the watch?"

"Our servants, do you mean?"

"Yes. They did not desert you. They followed you from St. Francis to Chatillon, and are ready now to lay down their lives for you if need be. And now come on. We can do nothing for Cora here; but I can almost swear that she shall be restored to you in safety."

The knowledge that Jacques and Maurice were at liberty and at work gave the prisoners new courage, and St. Hubert was content to move on without asking further questions.

With rapid, noiseless steps the Bohemian led the way through the vaulted passage, then up a flight of stone steps, at the head of which two sentinels were stretched upon the flagging in a slumber that was not easily to be broken.

Another passage was threaded; then another flight of steps; and then two more sleeping guardmen. At length the outer door was reached, and when Goliath had unlocked it he deposited the ponderous key in the pocket of a sleeping sentinel.

"Let me go out first," he whispered.

He gently opened the door and passed out, and soon returned with the intelligence that the coast was clear.

Then the prisoners followed him out from the gloomy place, and in a few moments more they stood in the open street, with the stars of heaven looking down upon them.

CHAPTER VIII.

"You are not going down through the square?" said St. Hubert, as he noticed that the guide had turned that way.

"Yes," replied Goliath. "The dark, narrow ways are the most closely watched. Follow me fearlessly, only keep your faces shaded."

It was but a short distance to the square, and when they reached it they saw several persons moving in different directions; but the Bohemian seemed to take no notice of them. He proceeded directly to the guillotine, where he stopped, remarking as he did so:

"It is a matter of caution to pay our respects to this instrument. We must not act as though we were afraid of it. Ah! my friends, the Jacobins who now sleep are probably dreaming of the grand sight which has been promised them for the morrow."

"They expect to see our heads come off," said De Courcy, with a shudder.

"Yes."

"And what have we done that the people of Chatillon should so suddenly become our deadly enemies?"

"That is not it," returned Goliath, shaking his head. "You have but few enemies—but very few. The people who look so eagerly for the pouring out of blood are crazy. They are not themselves; they are not responsible. There shall be another revolution ere long; and when it comes you shall find Gabriel Dracon and his chief abettors suffering at the hands of these very people what they are now making others suffer."

"And may heaven bring the time speedily," ejaculated St. Hubert. "But we have stopped long enough here. My soul! this is too horrible! Look where a bright star is reflected from that dark pool beneath the scaffold. Have the fiends no thought of decency? They might at least make a cap of common earth and hide that dreadful flood! Let us stop here no longer."

As the marquis spoke, two men approached from another direction.

"Ah, Goliath—are you looking at the compagnie des îles? How quietly it rests there in the starlight! But, ma foi, it will have work to-morrow; and I shall be here to see."

It was besotted, ragged man who thus spoke; and when he discovered the Bohemian's companions, he wished to know who they were.

"Oh, these are friends of mine who have come down from Briou to see our guillotine at work."

"Parbleu! They'll have a rare sight to-morrow. I wonder how St. Hubert and De Courcy sleep to-night. *Dieable!* I don't understand why they've been allowed to live so long."

The two *miserables* passed ground behind the scaffold, and as soon as they were gone, Goliath started across the square.

His followers never breathed more freely than they did at that moment, for their hearts had been hushed while those two men were talking, and they had hardly dared to open their lips.

"There can be no danger from those men?" said St. Hubert, coming up to Goliath's side as they approached the farther bound of the square.

"No," returned the guide. "They are only hangers-on about the guillotine. We have met nothing to fear yet."

A short walk from the square brought the party to the edge of the town, and as soon as the houses were left behind they quickened their pace.

Two sentinels were passed on the highway, but Goliath explained that he had put them to sleep, as he had done those at the prison.

"I did not do it myself," he said; "but it was done by one who is in my service, and whom we shall be likely to meet ere long. We have not much further to go on foot—not more than a mile. You know the Wood of St. Jean?"

"Yes."

"I shall leave you there."

In a little while this wood was reached, and behind a copse of maples they found four horses, with a boy in charge.

This boy, as St. Hubert could see in the dim

sharpened, was a bright-eyed, nimble fellow, apparently about fifteen years of age, possessing an honest, intelligent look; and when he spoke, his voice had that clear, rasilical ring which is alone sufficient to inspire confidence.

"Now," said the Bohemian, "you have nothing to wait for here. These are some of your own horses, and were procured by Jacques and Maurice."

"And where are they?" asked the marquis.

"You will not see them to-night," answered Goliath. "They are on duty in the town."

"But they will be known if they are seen."

"Not in the disguises with which I have furnished them. You would not recognize them if you were to meet them in open day. But you shall see them as soon as we have gained possession of Cora, and I trust that will not be long. At all events, you must have that matter in my hands, for you can do nothing. And now, the sooner you are off, the better. This boy's name is Jamblique, and you may trust him with your very lives. He will conduct you to the cot of an old hunter, named Cimon Florac, where you will be perfectly safe, for the present—that is, if you are cautious, and do not suffer yourselves to be seen by your enemies. Florac's dwelling is in a deep vale of the Vosges, and if further concealment becomes necessary, he will take you to the mountains. Jamblique will explain everything to your host, and you may be sure of the best treatment. Now let me see you in your saddles, for I wish to know that you are ready on your way before I return."

"One word," said Leopold de Courcy, laying hold upon Goliath's arm, and gazing eagerly into his face. "Before we separate you must do me one more favour. Do not send us away under such a load of doubt and anxiety. Tell us who and what you are."

"Ah, my friend," replied the Bohemian, "you are now trespassing. You must be fully aware, from what you have this night seen me do, that my own personal safety depends upon my keeping my own secrets. Should I reveal myself to you the secret would be mine no longer. There is but one safe way, and that, for the present, I am bound to keep. At some time we may know each other better, but just at this moment you have more need of finding Cimon Florac than you have for knowing more of me."

Without further delay the fugitives mounted their horses, and having once more thanked their strange friend for his efforts in their behalf, they drew their reins, and followed the boy into the deep wood.

For the distance of some five or six miles they were forced to proceed at a moderate pace, as the forest path was very dark and devious; but by-and-by, when they came to a better road, they started into a gallop, and sped rapidly on.

At the foot of a hill the horses came to a walk, and St. Hubert asked the guide how far they had ridden.

"We have come a good twenty miles, sir," replied the boy, "and we have full twenty more to ride. I think the horses will stand it."

"They must stand it."

"We have time enough, sir. We shall reach the Forest of Longeau before daylight, and beyond that you have little to fear from your pursuers. We shall keep clear of the villages, and I doubt if we meet any human being until we find old Florac."

In the course of half an hour another hill was reached, and as the horses again came to a walk, De Courcy rode up to Jamblique's side.

"Do you belong to this part of the country, my boy?"

"Yes, sir?"

"Is Cimon Florac your father?"

"No, sir."

"Have you known Goliath long?"

If De Courcy had taken a hint from the boy's manner, he would not have pursued his questioning any farther; but he was eager and anxious to know something of the Bohemian, for he had thought of nothing else during the ride thus far, and the more he thought the more intense became his perplexity and curiosity.

"I have known Goliath long enough to know that he is to be trusted as a friend and feared as an enemy."

Jamblique spoke those words very sharply, and then turned his face in another direction.

But De Courcy was not to be put off thus.

"What you say of him must be true. Has his home been long in the Cote d'Or?"

"Pardon me, sir. If you would know more of Goliath than you now know, you must wait until you see him. I will guide you to the mountains, but I cannot give you information upon matters which do not concern me. You must not be offended, sir."

"Not at all, my boy. You are right."

Leopold was not offended, though he could not entirely hide his chagrin.

Jamblique soon started his horse into a quicker walk, and presently broke into a gallop over the crest of the hill.

De Courcy fell back to the side of St. Hubert, and the two conversed awhile upon the subject that gave them so much trouble or thought, but they were as far from a solution of the problem as ever.

The guide had not been far out of the way in his reckoning, for just as the first streaks of day appeared, the party reached the Forest of Longeau, and in two hours more they pulled up before the door of a low-roofed, vine-clad cot, which was situated in a deep, narrow valley, far away from any other human habitation.

On all hands arose the towering summits of the Vosges, some of them bleak and barren, while some were covered with dense forest. It was a wild, lonely place, but at that time its very loneliness made it inviting to the fugitives.

The first note of introduction which our travellers received was from the loud barking of two large dogs; but their master quickly made his appearance, and having quieted his canine watchers, he turned to the boy and called him by name.

"Ha, Jamblique, is it this you?"

"Ay, good master Florac. I trust that I have not grown so old but that you recognize me."

"Ma foi!" cried the host, with a smile. "Heaven knows you were always old enough. But who are these gentlemen with you?"

The boy slipped from his saddle and delivered to the hunter the errand he bore from Goliath, and as soon as the master was understood, the good man approached his guests and bade them welcome. He was well advanced in years—threescore at least—but he was upright in form, and in the very prime of physical manhood.

"I have heard of the Marquis St. Hubert," he said; "and I have also heard of Leopold de Courcy. You are welcome, gentlemen, and if it lies in my power to help you in your present need you may command me. Goliath is my friend, and since you come with his introduction I have no disposition to question your claims upon me. If you will enter my cot, Jamblique will take care of the horses."

There was such an unmistakeable air of honesty and good-heartedness in the bearing and in the speech of the hunter, that our friends had no hesitation in trusting him, and before they had finished the simple but substantial breakfast which he placed before them, they were on the best terms imaginable with their host. As soon as Jamblique had eaten his breakfast he made preparation for departing.

"Do you mean to take away our horses?" asked St. Hubert, as he saw the animals led out.

"Certainly," replied the hunter. "We have no safe place here in which to keep them, and their presence might lead some inquisitive spirit to look after their owners. Jamblique will look out for them."

The marquis saw the propriety of the movement, and made no objection to it. But before the boy left he asked if he intended soon to return to Chatillon.

"As soon as I can, sir," was the answer.

"And of course you will see Goliath?"

"Yes."

"And if he succeeds in rescuing my child, perhaps he will send you to conduct her to this place."

"He may."

"Of course you will be careful?"

"You need not fear, sir. If your daughter is once set free from the Jacobin prison, I assure you she shall be safely brought hither."

St. Hubert had a few words of caution to send to Goliath, a message to his valet, a few more words to the boy himself, and then, when the young fellow had started off, he took De Courcy's arm and walked back to the cot, where they were soon joined by their host.

Paul was busily engaged in examining the scenery without.

"There is one more chance," said Sir Leopold, while the hunter was gone into the porch on some errand, "I must, if possible, learn something of the Bohemian."

"Why, really, Leopold, you seem to be more anxious than I am on that point."

"I cannot tell you how anxious I am," said De Courcy. "The more I think of the man, of the strange manner in which he appeared to us at the abbey, and of the still more strange manner in which he has befriended us, the more eager I am to find out who and what he is."

"After all," suggested St. Hubert, "he may be only what he appears—only some wandering Bohemian who has made free with our preserves in times past."

"I know better than that," returned De Courcy, with emphatic assurance. "My instincts cannot be so far out of the way. In some manner this man is to have an influence upon my life."

"He has already done so, for he has saved your life."

"That is not my meaning. He is to have no influence in a deeper sense. I am not superstitious, but I do believe that Goliath possesses some mystic power over both you and me."

"Ah, here comes our host; he will repulse you if you question him upon that subject."

"Never mind; I shall try him."

"Good Cimon," pursued De Courcy, after the old man had taken a seat, "the marquis and I have just been talking of Goliath. I suppose you have known him for some time?"

"Yes—for several years," answered Florac. The frankness with which he spoke emboldened De Courcy to proceed:

"Does he belong in this section?"

"If he is a Bohemian, I suppose he belongs with his tribe."

"Do you know anything of his tribe?"

"Not much."

"Has he ever made it his home in the Cote d'Or?"

"Really, sir, that is more than I can tell. He comes and goes at pleasure; and if he stops at other places as he does here, I should say he had a home nowhere."

"You have heard him speak of us—of the marquis and myself?"

"Parbleu! You must not question me thus. If Goliath has ever trusted me with any of his secrets, be sure I shall keep them. If he is like most men, he must have some little passages of life which he would not like to have generally known. We are all of us apt to have such. Perhaps from your own life you would not like to have the curtain wholly raised."

Leopold de Courcy gave a sudden start, and the colour left his cheeks as he met the hunter's gaze; but he soon rallied, and with a faint smile, said:

"You are right, Florac; and you will pardon me if I have seemed too curious."

"I think," added St. Hubert, smiling more naturally than his friend had done, "that we had better let the Bohemian rest; and he may, in his own way, and in the time of his own choosing, tell us all we wish to know."

At this point Paul came in. He was eloquent in his praise of the scenery; but he hardly thought the cot a safe place in which to live.

"I should think," he said, "that during the severe storms which sometimes rage in these mountains your dwelling would be in great danger. Doesn't the torrent ever form in this gorge?"

"Yes," replied the hunter; "and once I had a cot swept away; but it stood farther in the gorge, and was upon lower ground. However, I do not entirely trust this place. I have a spacious cave part way up the mountain, and when the storm rages very hard I seek shelter there. I will show it to you after dinner, if you have a mind to climb so far."

The youth was willing to climb anywhere for the purpose of seeing mountain caves, and he promised his host that he would go.

Three days passed, and all went safely with the hunter's guests. Paul had been upon the top of the highest mountain, and St. Hubert had done something in the way of taking game.

The fourth day dawned, and at a very early hour in the morning Paul met the marquis at some distance from the cot.

"Ah, Paul, you walk early this morning."

"So do you, marquis."

"I am uneasy."

"Grand Dieu!" so am I. Oh, do you think any harm can have come to Cora?"

"I don't know. I pray not."

"We should have heard something ere this if she—"

"Hush! hush, Paul! We will wait another day."

(To be continued.)

OUR COLONIES.—It may not be uninteresting to our readers to be made acquainted with the amounts which the "governors" of those little offshoots of the parent country—"our colonies"—receive for the performance of their difficult duties. The Governor-General of Canada (Viscount Monk) has yearly £7,777; the Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, £3,000; the Lieutenant-Governor of Prince Edward Island, £1,500; the Governor Commander-in-Chief and Vice-Admiral of Newfoundland, £2,000; the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Leeward Islands, £3,000; the Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of South Australia, £4,000; the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of West Australia, £1,800; of Barbadoes and Windward Isles, £4,000; of the Bahama Islands, £3,000; of British Guiana, £5,000; of Berbice, £1,500; of the Cape of Good Hope, £5,000; with 500£ for a country residence; of Ceylon, £7,000; of the Falkland Islands, £900; of Gibralter, £5,000; of the Gold Coast, £2,000; of Dominica, £1,300; of Gre-

nada, 1,300*l.*; of British Honduras, 1,800*l.*; of Hong Kong, 5,000*l.*; of Jamaica, 5,000*l.*; of Lebanon, 1,100*l.*; of the Isle of Man, 950*l.*, and fees and residence; of Malta, 5,000*l.*; of the Mauritius, 7,000*l.*; of Natal, 2,500*l.*; of New South Wales, 7,000*l.*; of New Zealand, 4,500*l.*; of Queensland, 4,000*l.*; of St. Christopher, 1,300*l.*; of St. Helena, 2,000*l.*; of St. Lucia, 700*l.*; of St. Vincent's, 1,300*l.*; of Sierra Leone, 2,000*l.*; of Tasmania, 4,000*l.*; of Trinidad, 3,500*l.*; of Vancouver Island, 3,000*l.*; and last, though not least, Victoria, whose Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief (Sir C. Darling), has 10,000*l.* a year.

CAVE AND ROCK SYMBOLS IN SCOTLAND

At a meeting of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Professor Simpson, now Sir James Young Simpson, Bart., gave an interesting account, illustrated by drawings, of some ancient sculptures on the walls of caves in Fifeshire. He more especially spoke of a series of eight or nine caves at Wemyss, on the coast.

Probably it was from the ancient name of these caves, "weans," that the place took its name. Some of the caves are of great size—one is 90 ft. long, 40 ft. broad, and nearly 40 ft. in height. In several of them there are no sculptures traceable—these being most numerous in two caves, named Jonathan's Cave and the Dovecot Cave. The ornamentation of these cave walls is like what is found on the sculptured stones of Scotland, including what are the most frequent of any in these caves, the so-called "spectacle ornament" crossed with the N symbol.

Among the symbols also were observed the elephant, very rudely carved, the comb and mirror, specially treated of in the letters on Geometrical Symbols; the fish, and occasionally the serpent, with the "sceptre" carried through it. The "arch, or horse-shoe ornament" was also occasionally found.

The interest of the sculptures discovered in the Fife caves, said Sir James, was this—that, with one exception, the symbols he had spoken of had never been found excepting in monoliths, and these monoliths were supposed (in some cases only) to be sepulchral. They had now, however, been found in quite a different position (in Scotland as in England), and where the idea of their sepulchral character would not apply. They had in these caves the bear, the deer, the swan, the peacock, the fish, the serpent, and so on, exactly like what they found in the sculptured stones.

The cave sculptures, he had no doubt, were coeval with the monoliths. They found crosses on them in considerable numbers, sometimes the cross standing on a tripod; and in one case they had the cross and tripod inverted.

For himself, he had come to no conclusion as to what was the purpose of these carvings, for he thought their supposed sepulchral character was taken away by the position in which they were found. Further, he might mention that other Scottish caves had been found with sculptures on them, as, for instance, Bruce's Cave in Arran, and certain caves in Northumberland, and in some of them the same kind of carvings had been discovered.

There were plenty of caves in Scotland yet to be examined, some of them of great size—in the Western Islands, in Argyleshire, in Galloway, in the interior of Lanarkshire, and in Roxburghshire, not forgetting the cave at Haworthen.

THE WORKS on the site of the Paris Exhibition of 1861 continue most actively. The drainage works have been carried on on a large scale, and the foundations are being laid for the heaviest parts of the building. The hollow portions of the grounds are being filled up with material from the heights of Trocadero, at Passy, opposite the Champ de Mars, the transport being made by means of a railway laid from Trocadero, over the Pont de Jena, as far as the site of the building. Most of the trees in the Avenues Suffren and Labourdonnay have been felled, and the slopes levelled. It has been definitely arranged that the principal entrance is to be on the Quai d'Orsay, and that a terrace will be there constructed at the entrance of the Pont de Jena.

EVILS OF GOSSIP.—I have known a country society which withered away all to nothing under the dry rot of gossip only. Friendships, once as firm as granite, dissolved to jelly, and then run away to water, only because of this; love, that promised a future as enduring as heaven and as stable as truth, evaporated into a morning mist that turned to a day's long tears, only because of this; a father and a son were set foot to foot with the fiery breath of an anger that would never cool again between them, only because of this; and a husband and his young wife, each straining at the hated leash, which in the beginning had been the golden bondage of a God-gesess love, sat mournfully by the side of the grave

where all their love and all their joy lay buried, and only because of this. I have seen faith transformed to mean doubt, hope given place to grim despair, and charity taken on itself the features of black malevolence, all because of the spell of words of scandal and the magic mutterings of gossip. Great crimes work great wrongs, and the deepest tragedies of human life spring from its largest passions, but woes and most melancholy are the uncatalogued tragedies that issue from gossip and detraction; most mournful the shipwreck often of noble natures and lovely lives by the bitter words and dead salt-waters of slander. So easy to say, yet so hard to disprove—throwing on the innocent all the burden and the strain of demonstrating their innocence, and punishing them as guilty if unable to pluck out the sting they never see, and to silence words they never hear; gossip and slander are the deadliest and the cruellest weapons man has forged for his brother's heart.

SCIENCE.

From the experiments made by Prof. Thomson, of Copenhagen, on light as a source of motion, he calculates that the light emitted by the sun would lift thirty-five billions of tons, one billion of kilometers high per second, and that it would raise the earth twenty feet at the same time.

ALLOYS OF MANGANESE.

In Germany M. E. Priefer has commercially prepared alloys of manganese with iron or copper possessing valuable properties, and the applications of which are constantly improving in number and utility.

To prepare the alloys of iron and manganese (ferro-manganese), he made a mixture of pulverised oxide of manganese, charcoal dust (corresponding in quantity to the oxygen of oxide), and of metallic iron sufficiently broken up, such as minute grains of cast-iron filings or turnings of iron or steel, &c.; the mixture was put into a graphite crucible, which would hold from 15 to 25 kilog., and covered with a coating of charcoal dust, sea salt, &c., then heated for a few hours at a white heat. After cooling there was at the bottom of the crucible a metallic homogenous mass, containing but very insignificant quantities of foreign bodies.

Of these alloys the most important are those containing two equivalents of manganese to one of iron, and four equivalents of manganese to one of iron, and corresponding to 66·3 per cent., and 79·7 per cent. of manganese.

Both are harder than tempered steel; they are capable of receiving a very high polish, they melt at red heat, and can be easily poured; they do not oxidise in the air, and even in the water only superficially; their white colour is of a shade between steel and silver.

Alloys of copper and manganese are similarly obtained; they resemble bronze, but are much harder and more durable. Alloys of tin are very fusible, durable, and easy to work; in colour and brilliancy they may be compared to silver.

The iron and manganese alloy furnishes a very simple means of adding to iron or steel a given amount of manganese; by the addition of 1·10 to 5 per cent. very satisfactory results are obtained.

As an instance of the evolution of heat by plants, a geranium has been found to possess a heat of 87 degrees, when the air around was at 81 degrees.

CAPTAIN WILSON, R.E., has succeeded in obtaining the true level of the Dead Sea. He has fixed the greatest depression at 1,238 feet below the Mediterranean, and when the sea is highest the difference is 1,289·5 feet.

A COMMON-SIZED cabbage was ascertained by Hales to exhale from fifteen to twenty ounces of water during the twelve hours of daylight. This quantity is more than is given off by the skin of man in the same time.

ELECTRIC BUOY.—M. Duchemin proposes to construct Ampere's electric boat upon a sufficiently large scale, and to use it as a warning-buoy on shoals, etc. He proposes to float, by means of cork, a carbon cylinder within a hollow cylinder of zinc, the connecting wire to be made to strike a bell in the usual way. He speaks of small cylinders, but gives no suggestion as to the size necessary to operate a bell large enough to be heard at any distance.

NEW HEATING APPARATUS.—M. Pelon has invented a new heating apparatus adapted to the warming of railway carriages. He calls it a heat-generator. It consists of a cone of wood, which is covered with hemp, and which is made to revolve with great speed within a hollow cone of copper. These are enclosed in a metallic vessel, through which air is passed, and becoming heated in the passage, is then conveyed to the carriage. The inventor

proposes to place a generator outside each carriage; motion will be given to the wooden cone by one of the axles of the carriage, and the heated air will be admitted to the vehicle by an arrangement under the control of the passengers. M. Pelon, like every sanguine inventor, thinks his machine capable of very extensive application, asserting that large mills could be more cheaply warmed by his apparatus than by fires. In the meantime, and pending more extended trials, he exhibits a little machine which keeps chocolate hot.

A SIMPLE and perfect form of filter has been devised by the Apparatus of the College of France. It is made by placing in the tank of impure water a vessel so arranged that a sponge which it contains shall lap over its edge and dip into the water of the tank. The sponge absorbs and purifies the water, and allows it to drop into the receiver.

A MECHANICAL TRIUMPH.—In Chicago, recently, an immense iron block, located on the corner of Wells and South Water Streets, owned by Geo. R. Robbins, of that city, eighty by one hundred and fifty feet, five stories in height, and weighing with its contents about 50,000 tons, was raised twenty-seven inches to the grade of the street, without wrenching a hair's breadth, and without in the least interrupting the business of the occupants. It was raised by jack screws.

THE ONLY WOODEN VESSEL under construction at Chatham Dockyard is the Reindeer. She is ordered to be ready for launching by next March. She will be armed with a few heavy guns instead of an armament of seventeen guns she was originally designed to carry. In order to enable her to mount the heavy ordnance intended, she has been constructed with considerably greater strength than any previous wooden ship, angle-iron being worked into her timbers, and her bulkheads of iron.

A NEW BRICK.—A Paris architect, M. Osselen borrowing the idea of the Romans, has invented a brick which hardens with time, completely resists humidity, and is said to realize an economy of 40 per cent. in building. He had demonstrated these advantages in important works here, and he proposes giving further ample proofs at the approaching Paris Exhibition. This system is applicable to every kind of construction, but must be peculiarly interesting to those who occupy themselves with improved dwellings for the poor.

NEW GREEN AVANTURINE GLASS.—M. Pelouze recommends as a beautiful variety of ornamental glass one composed as follows:—Sand, 250 parts; carbonate of soda, 100 parts; carbonate of lime, 50 parts; bichromate of potassa, 40 parts. This glass melts with perceptibly greater difficulty than that without the bichromate, is of a deep green colour, and full of small spangles, crystals of oxide of chrome, which sparkle with a brilliancy inferior only to the diamond. As it resembles in character the avanturine glass of Venice, M. Pelouze proposes for it the name of chrome avanturine.

AN ARTIFICIAL ALABASTER.—M. Henry St. Claire Deville lately communicated to the Academy of Sciences the curious fact that magnesia obtained by calcination from chloride of magnesium will, when exposed to the action of water for some months, acquire considerable consistency, and become hard enough to cut marble. A lamina of this magnesia of moderate thickness is translucent, like alabaster. With this substance M. Deville has been enabled to take casts as if with plaster of Paris, only the former sets under water. A mixture of chalk and magnesia in powder, made up into a paste with water, is good for moulding, and will become exceedingly hard under water.

An important trial of the efficiency of gun-cotton as compared with gunpowder, for blasting purposes, has recently taken place at the Trow Rock Quarry, South Shields. The experiment was for the purpose of trying gun-cotton prepared under the process of Baron Lenk. The advantage expected to accrue from the substitution of this gun-cotton for powder is the more economical working, arising from the greater power of the cotton. For example, there was in the mine to be exploded 720 lb. of cotton; while, had it been powder that was employed, there would have been twenty barrels of blasting powder, each containing 100 lb., or 2,000 lb. in all. The experiments were in every respect highly successful.

The most recent adaptation of photography to civil engineering is said in Paris to have been effected by the optician Chevalier, who has succeeded in arranging an apparatus for taking geometric plans by photography. The instrument is provided with a meridional telescope, and a compass in order to set it to any given point; a circular colodionized glass is placed horizontally at the bottom of a camera obscura, formed of copper, and moved by clockwork, so as to describe within a given time the entire circle of which the station chosen is the centre, and the various ob-

jets as they are received in turn by the lens are photographed on the circular plate through an extremely narrow slit in the side of the copper box. The operation is to be repeated at three stations in order to avoid error, and the result is said to be highly satisfactory. The three circular plates are then used to lay down on paper all the points of the plan described. The same instrument working vertically, instead of horizontally, serves also for levelling.

DISCOVERY OF BORAX IN CALIFORNIA.

The San Francisco *Bulletin* says that a lake has been found in California which contains inexhaustible supplies of the purest borax.

Borax Lake, whence the article is obtained, is about two miles in circumference, surrounded by high hills, and furnishes a reservoir for the water that pours down their sides during the rainy season. In the summer season it is quite shallow and the crystallized borax is extracted from the mud on its bottom in banks varying in size from a ten-pin to the minutest particles.

After extracting these crystals the mud of the entire lake has been found to contain a large per centage of borax.

The company have sunk an artesian well to the depth of sixty feet, and find the mud to contain, even at that depth, more or less borax.

Recently mud taken out at a depth of several feet was analyzed by Professor G. E. Moore, after the crystals had been extracted, and found to contain 11 per cent. of borax.

The quantity used in San Francisco is between 30 and 40 tons per annum. From 3,000 to 4,000 tons are used annually in Great Britain; 1,100 tons being consumed in the potteries of Staffordshire alone.

Hitherto most of the borax of commerce has been manufactured in England from boracic acid, obtained from Tuscany and the common soda. Nature's crucible does not appear to have conjoined the two substances in the form of crystallized borax, except in a very few places, and in limited quantities.

It has been found in certain lakes in Thibet and in some parts of Persia and China, but the deposit at Borax Lake, in California, is probably the largest hitherto discovered, and chemically analyzed proves it to be the purest.

The Admiralty has given instructions for one of the iron mortar vessels belonging to the squadron laid up at Chatham dockyard to be lent to the Great Eastern, to be used as a tender to that vessel during the time she is lying in the Medway receiving on board the new Atlantic telegraph cable.

COMBINED ENVELOPE AND LETTER SHEET.—This invention relates to a new and improved combination of an envelope and letter sheet, which, it is believed, possesses advantages over the various plans hitherto devised for effecting the same end. The invention consists in applying flaps to the letter sheet in such a manner that when the sheet is folded with a single fold, the flaps may be turned over the folded sheet and gummed, so as to securely conceal the face side of the letter sheet and render it impossible to see its contents, and the invention at the same time admitting of the flaps being widely torn open without at all injuring the letter sheet, and the letter sheet, when folded and the flaps gummed over it, having the appearance of an ordinary detached envelope with a letter sheet within it.

The total eclipse of the sun on the 25th of April last, though invisible in England, was visible as a partial eclipse at the Cape of Good Hope, and as a total eclipse in Chili, where it was observed by Padre Cappelletti, who has communicated a portion of his observation to Padre Secchil, of Rome. The complete obscuration lasted 2 min. 20 sec., and during this period he saw an immense mountain of fire, cone-shaped, 57 degrees N.W. from the zenith. Nearly opposite, a smaller protuberance of the same kind appeared. After a lapse of 38 seconds, a series of coloured flames appeared, so that the sun seemed to be on fire, giving the idea of trains of powder igniting successively and with great rapidity. During the totality the moon was surrounded by a ring of silvery light, which was followed by a crown of rays.

APPLICATION OF SHELLAC AND THE ANILINE DYES TO PAINTING.—All resins having acid properties, caoutchouc and the aniline dyestuffs, dissolve in the solution of aniline. Shellac is thoroughly soluble in it, and the resulting solution may be coloured with the concentrated solution of an aniline dyestuff, the result being an excellent material for producing transparent paintings on glass, porcelain, &c., to which it very firmly adheres. The aniline dyestuff may be dissolved directly in the aniline solution of shellac, with the aid of heat; but not fuchine, since this, when heated with shellac, is changed to blue; hence, when this substance is to be dissolved, a solution of it in aniline, prepared without heat, is to be mixed with the aniline solution of shellac. These shellac solutions

of the dyes may be mixed with oil paint not containing lead, and thus a brilliancy of tone may be imparted to the various colours in oil which they do not themselves possess.

HOW ICE-CRYSTALS ARE FORMED.—Water, in solidifying by cold, viz., in freezing, forms itself into crystals whose facets are hexagons and incline to each other at a constant angle of sixty degrees. The little globe of water, then, that would ordinarily constitute a rain-drop, in falling through an atmosphere of a lower temperature than the freezing point, passes to the solid state, and its particles, piling themselves into their appointed hexagonal forms with the geometrical precision, produce those exquisite crystalline flowers; thus obeying the supreme order of the universe which ordains that even ice shall put forth its blossoms. But why these blossoms should assume the complicated and varied forms in which we find them—whether these variations are due to electrical conditions of the atmosphere, or to the chemical constitution of the water from which they are formed—are questions yet to be solved.

In the same fashion that the French Government wishes each nation to cook its own peculiar eatables at the coming Exhibition, it asks now that each nation shall send over its own theatricals and play its own pieces—modern, if possible. Where will England be? We must play adapted French pieces, or decline the contest.

CHEAP.—Marshal Saxe, meeting one day a soldier led out for execution, for stealing a turkey, pitied him, exclaiming, "Miserable man, how could you risk your life for five francs?" To which the soldier replied with firmness, "General, I risk it every day for five sous!" (the French soldier's pay). The Marshal, touched with the soldier's *sang froid*, granted him his pardon.

DR. SIMPSON, whose elevation to a baronetcy is announced, is the discoverer of the anaesthetic properties of chloroform, and has thereby conferred a lasting benefit on the human race. For his services he received from the French Academy of Sciences the Montyon prize of 2,000 francs, and from the King of Sweden the Knighthood of the Royal Order of St. Olaf. His professional works have been translated into nearly every European language. He has held various distinguished posts in the medical world.

A MONETARY convention has recently been signed between France, Belgium, Italy, and Switzerland. The principal object of this act is to remedy the inconveniences resulting from a diversity of standard in the smaller coins of the four states. It also lays down common rules concerning the coinage of other moneys of gold and silver. By thus constituting a monetary union of the four countries so closely connected by business relations and neighbourhood, the new arrangement satisfies their reciprocal interests and meets requirements long since recognized.

SILK FROM COCHIN-CHINA.—The high price which raw silk has reached in France, and the facility with which it may be produced in Cochin-China, have created great emulation among the occupiers of land. Mulberry plantations have been commenced in several places, but especially near Saigon. The natives, moreover, are now applying themselves to commerce and industry. They have likewise adopted the French system of measurement. This was the more easy, inasmuch as their measure called *maw* is equal to half the French hectare. It covers a superficies of about forty square yards.

A RECENT law authorizes the Greek Government to borrow fifteen million drachmas to pay the floating debts of the state. The floating debts of Greece on the 31st of October, 1865, were 12,360,000, and the payments immediately due, or past due, were 3,411,000, besides 4,795,000 for the expenses of the month of October, and the unpaid arrears of preceding months. To meet these demands, which exceed 20,000,000, the Accountant-General states that there are only 700,000 drachmas in cash in the Treasury, besides 2,181,000 of good debts and 12,227,000 of bad debts.

OYSTER CULTURE IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.—It appears a Mr. W. L. Kubbach, an officer in the army, has leased Brading Harbour for the purpose of constructing ponds for breeding oysters, and commenced his works last September twelvemonth, which have progressed very favourably until the present time. Near the mill in the harbour are four large breeding ponds, one of which is about seventy feet long by fifty-six wide; the other three are nearly of the same dimensions. These ponds are well embanked, supported by piles, gravelled, and perfectly firm and sound; are well adapted for the purpose, having hard, clean bottoms, mud being very pernicious and injuri-

ous to the growth of the "spat;" they are thatched over with facines, and secured with galvanized wire; and supplied with everything necessary to give success to the undertaking; they are from eighteen inches to two feet in depth. They remain full at the lowest tides, consequently the oysters are always submerged, and at high water the sites of the ponds can only be discovered by the ash poles which surround them. Already a great number of oysters are fattening for the market.

STATISTICS.

ACCORDING to the latest statistics, Prussia has 1,001 cities, four of which contain more than 100,000 inhabitants, 99 more than 10,000, and 165 more than 5,000.

THE population of Paris, according to the French prbers, counted, at the end of the sixteenth century, only 100,000 inhabitants. Two centuries later, in 1709, the population was 500,000. Since that period the increase has been as follows:—1722, 560,000; 1824, 750,000; 1842, 1,000,000; 1861, 1,500,129; 1863, 1,667,841.

There are now 23 steam-packet companies in this country, who own about 370 steamers, the tonnage of which is 560,600, the horse-power 110,000, and the value between 30,000,000 and 40,000,000 sterling. 164 of these ships are connected with Liverpool, 94 with Southampton, 40 with Hull, 35 with London, 16 with Glasgow, and 15 with Hartlepool.

On the export of sherry wine from Jerez de la Frontera and Port St. Mary for the year 1865, the total was 50,457 butts, against 67,859 in 1864. The principal exporters from Jerez were Gonzalez and Byass, 4,528 butts; M. Misa, 3,092; P. Garvey, 2,939; P. Domeneq, 2,765; F. W. Cossens and Co., 2,446; and Mackenzie and Co., 2,103; and from Port St. Mary, Widow Harmony, 1,912; M. and F. Tosar, 1,820; and Duff, Gordon, and Co., 1,674. All others figure for less than 1,500 butts each.

THE first merchant vessel crossed the Atlantic from the Clyde in 1719; in 1735 the Virginian merchants in Glasgow had fifteen vessels engaged in the trade. Of the 90,000 hogsheads of tobacco imported into the United Kingdom in 1772, Glasgow alone imported 49,000. From 1752 to 1770, the total tonnage dues of the harbour of Glasgow amounted to only £147, or equal to an average of £8 per annum. In 1780, the Clyde having been deepened, they reached £1,515.

LOOK TO YOUR CHIMNEYS.—The following new regulation has now come into force, so far as the metropolis is concerned:—If the chimney of any house or other building within the metropolis is on fire, the occupier of such house or building shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 20s., but if such occupier proves that he has incurred such penalty by reason of the neglect or wilful default of any other person, he may recover summarily from such person the whole or any part of the penalty he may have incurred as occupier.

ACCOMPANIED by one lady only, the Empress, one day recently went from end to end of the Boulevard fair, stopping at the poorest stalls and buying small articles. These, whenever their price amounted to fifty cents, were paid for with a ten-franc piece, and a request was at the same time made that they might be taken care of until the return of the ladies. It is unnecessary to say that they never did return, and that about a hundred of the poorest stall-keepers found that they had a very pleasant addition to their year's profits.

"WIFE'S COSTS" IN THE DIVORCE COURT.—Two new rules, relative to a "wife's costs" in the Divorce Court, have now come into operation, to the effect that a wife, who has entered an appearance, may file her bill as against her husband for taxation, and the registrar is to ascertain and report to the court what would be a sufficient sum to be paid into court, or the security to be given by the husband to cover the costs of his wife. When a decision is against a wife no costs shall be allowed against the husband, except such as shall be allowed by the judge at the time of trial or hearing.

An episode of a very lachrymose, touching, and romantic character is heard of *apropos* of Marshal Vaillant. It seems he went to Rouen to be present at the unveiling of the statue of Napoleon I., where he was smitten by the attention of a little girl, Cecile Tormaire, who presented him with a bouquet, and he wrote thus of the dear child:—"Dear Colleague,—I have not forgotten that a darling child, with a spontaneous attention which went to my heart, offered me, while walking *incognito* with you on the

day of the inauguration, a lovely bouquet. I wish that this dear child may preserve for ever a memorial of the ceremony of the 15th August, and of the old Marshal who had on that occasion the honour to represent his sovereign, and therefore I beg you to transmit to her the portrait of the young prince, whom she will see one day on the throne as Napoleon IV. This child is very young, and I am very old; tell her family that if God grants me still some few years I will willingly seek every opportunity of being useful to her.—My friendship, VAILLANT." Moral. Little girls, mind you always present bouquets to strangers.

FACETIE.

THE BEST WINE.—Sheridan being asked what wine he liked best, replied: "Other people's."

HOW MIRACULOUS!

A short time since, while several persons were awaiting their turn in a barber's shop, a man rushed in, and with a face expressive of great commiseration said, addressing the barber:

"That was a terrible thing which happened on the railroad this morning!"

"What was that?" asked several voices.

"Why," exclaimed the man, "the entire train passed over four men and a young lady."

"They were instantly killed, of course?" exclaimed several voices.

"No," said the narrator, very coolly, "miraculous as it may seem, not one was injured."

"Why, how was that?"

"Well, they were under the viaduct arch when the train passed over it, to be sure."

A COQUETTE may be compared to tinder, which lays itself out to catch sparks, but does not always succeed in lighting a match.

Why should a man always wear a watch when he travels in a waterless desert?—Because every watch has a spring in it.

THE VAMPYRE bats are no doubt ugly customers, but we would rather be assailed by one than by a cricket bat.

WHY INDEED.—Why are all ballet girls mercenary paricides?—Because they get their living by executing their *pas* on the stage.

"All morning bitters have a heating tendency or effect," said a doctor to a young lady. "You will except a bitter cold morning, won't you, doctor?" inquired the lady, with a roguish smile.

A QUERER defences was recently made by a citizen on trial for slandering an alderman. The defendant stated that the alderman had no character, and therefore slander would be impossible.

TURN ABOUT.—"Well, Bridget, if I engage you I shall want you to stay at home whenever I shall wish to go out." "Well, ma'am, I have no objections, providin' you do the same when I wish to go out."

"No man can do anything against his will," said a metaphysician. "Can't he though?" exclaimed Jones. "Don't I get up at seven o'clock six mornings every week against my will?"

A DISTINGUISHED California Divine was asked, after a trip to Silverland, "What he thought of the country?" He replied,—"There are but three things in Wastee, sir—big mines, little mines, and whiskey shops."

"I WONDER why it is," remarked our tailor the other day, "that people who are fond of running up bills, never seem to come down with any money?" We were so much struck by the philosophy of the remark, that we immediately ordered a gorgeous coat.

A GENTLEMAN was about completing the sale of a horse which he was very anxious to dispose of, when a little urchin appeared, and innocently inquired: "Grandpa, which horse you goin' to sell—that one you built a fire under yesterday to make him d-r-a-w?" The bargain was at an end.

MARK DOWN.—A tall fellow persisted in standing during a performance, much to the annoyance of an audience, and was repeatedly requested to sit down, but would not, when a voice from the upper gallery called out: "Let him alone, honey; he's a tailor, and he's resting himself." He immediately sat down.

ONE POCKET.—As we learn from good authority the servants at the Tuilleries have been ordered by the new chamberlain, Dupuis, to have henceforth but one pocket in their suit of clothes, that pocket being only big enough to hold a pocket handkerchief. It will be perhaps thought that the object is to prevent the servants levying largesse upon the visitors. Not so, the idea is for the good of the Court, not the visitors, it having been found that birds and truffles

and many table delicacies constantly disappear, and it is hoped this will check the little peculation. What a good thing it would be if the visitors to certain courts where they make free with silver spoons and other silver articles were only allowed one pocket in their Court costumes!

RUSSIA TO PRUSSIA.

No, Sir, my Brother, contents;
To leave alone those Duchies;
Think not, from Denmark though you rent,
To keep them in your clutches.
It suited me to let you split
Your neighbour's realm asunder,
And from his crown detach a bit:
But now—hands off the plunder!

You chose to do a wicked thing,
"Twas not my cue to stop it.
You slew the Danes and robbed their King;

Must yield the prey: so drop it.
You stole, whilst I the theft surveyed,
What you shall hold no longer.

Denmark the weaker you have made!
Must not make Prussia stronger.

Thanksgiving for the spoil and slain,
As bound in pious duty,

You rendered, half, at least, in vain.
You must restore the booty.

Meanwhile remains a little bill.

Whose dread you'll hardly smother.
Thank One for slaughter if you will,

You'll have to pay another.

For bloodshed and expense you've naught

To show your angry nation,
Whose discontent may give you thought,

But give me no vexation.

Now see to Bismarck what you owe:

A bubble: and how hollow!

He to the dence had better go,

And you as well might follow. *Punch.*

QUIET AT EASE.—Foots, the actor, was one day taken into White's Club House by a friend who wanted to write a note. Lord Carmarthens approached to speak to him; but feeling rather shy, he merely said: "Mr. Foots, your handkerchief is hanging out of your pocket." Foots looking suspiciously round, and hurriedly thrusting the handkerchief back into his pocket, replied: "Thank you, my lord; you know the company better than I do."

A PHILOSOPHER.

A contemporary speaking of the recent election intelligence, says its receipt reminds him of the story of an old farmer, whose little boy came in to him one morning, and said:

"Father, the old black sheep has brought a pair of twin lambs."

"Good! That is the most profitable sheep I ever was the owner of!"

"But, father, one of the lambs is dead."

"All right, my son, the other will do better."

"But both of them are dead."

"It's just as well; the old sheep will get fat now!"

"But, father, the old sheep is dead, too."

"I am glad of it. She was a troublesome old thing—always the ringleader of the flock!"

RUNNING ACCOUNTS.—The valet of a man of fashion could get no money from him, and therefore told him that he should seek another master, and begged he would pay the arrears of his wages. The gentleman, who liked his servant, and was desirous of keeping him, said, "True, I am in your debt, but your wages are running on." "That's the very thing," answered the valet; "I am afraid they are running so fast that I shall never catch them."

LEGAL ADVICE.

An old lawyer was giving advice to his son, who was just entering upon the practice of his father's profession.

"My son," said the counsellor, "if you have a case where the law is clearly on your side, but justice seems to be against you, urge upon the jury the vast importance of sustaining the law. If, on the other hand, you are in doubt about the law, but your client's case is founded on justice, insist on the necessity of doing justice, though the heavens fall!"

"But," asked the son, "how shall I manage a case where both law and justice are dead against me?"

"In that case, my son, talk round it, talk round it!"

The accounts which are made out to the satisfied diners at restaurants are sometimes matters of astonishment to them, but they take it languidly, well knowing also that the rhetoric of the proprietor is not to be impugned. However, a young man about town recently dined at a good house, and was charged twelve francs. The next day, for precisely the same dinner, it was twenty francs. Out of a feeling of

curiosity, he dined there the third day, taking care to have just the same dinner. To his astonishment, the bill was twenty-eight francs. Not able to contain his French passion, he called the master, and produced the three bills, asking him what he meant by it. The old fellow was rather taken aback at first, and the visitor, satisfied that no answer could be made, and crowing over his triumph, said at last, "Wolf, sir, what excuse have you got?" "Excuse, sir! oh, sir, it is not for me to excuse myself! I must, of course, suffer." "Suffer! suffer what?" "Why, suffer for the loss, of course. All these bills should have been charged twenty-eight francs, but as the error has been made," etc., &c.

UNFORTUNATE COMPARISON.

A lady entered a shop and expressed a desire to see some wool delaines. The clerk, with elegant address, showed her a variety of pieces of fine texture and choice colouring.

After tossing and examining them to her heart's content, she remarked:

"The goods are part cotton, sir."

"My dear madam," returned the clerk, "these goods are as free from cotton as your breast is—(the lady starts) free from guile," he added.

POWDER WITHOUT BALL.—Dr. Goodall, of Eton, about the same time that he was made Provost of Eton, received also a Stall at Windsor. A young lady, whilst congratulating him on his elevation, and requesting him to give a ball during the vacation, happened to touch his wig with her fan, and caused the powder to fly about; upon which the doctor exclaimed, "My dear, you see you can get the powder out of the cannon, but not the ball."

A BRILLIANT IDEA—MARRIAGE A LA MODE.

Bridesmaid (to Bridegroom): "Oh dear Mr. Fitzdoodle! Such bad news! How will I break it to you! The bride has been taken ill and cannot come down."

Fitzdoodle: "Ah! too bad—aw—must say—very sorry—what's a fellow to do? I'm all dressed you see—and let's see—couldn't you ouwer a new bwide?"

THE PIGS AND THE SILVER SPOON.—The Earl of F—— kept a number of swine at his seat in Wiltshire, and crossing the yard one day he was surprised to see the pigs gathered round one trough, and making a great noise. Curiosity prompted him to see what was the cause, and on looking into the trough he perceived a large silver spoon. A servant came out, and began to abuse the pigs for crying so. "Well they may," said his lordship, "when they have got but one silver spoon among them all."

Rosa R——, a Scotch lady, gave her servant very particular instructions regarding visitors, explaining that they were to be shown into the drawing-room, and used the Scotticism, "Carry any ladies that call upstairs." On the arrival of the first visitors, Donald was eager to show his strict attention to the mistress's orders. Two ladies came together, and Donald, seizing one in his arms, said to the other, "Bide ye there till I come for ye;" and, in spite of her struggles and remonstrances, ushered the terrified visitor into his mistress's presence in this unorthodox fashion.

A FORTUNATE EXPEDIENT.—A gentleman of Trinity College, travelling through France, was annoyed at the slowness of the pace, and wishing to urge the postilion to greater speed, tried his bad French until he was out of patience. At last it occurred to him that if he was not understood, he might at least frighten the fellow by using some high-sounding words, and he roared into the ears of the postilion: "Westmoreland, Cumberland, Northumberland, Durham!" which the fellow mistaking for some dreadful threat, had the desired effect, and induced him to increase his speed.

A GREEN one, who had a great desire to possess a goose alive, set off to a neighbouring town, resolved to buy one, and fatten it for himself. Having made a bargain, he was returning home when he was met by a waggish friend, to whom he showed his purchase. "Why," said his friend to him, on seeing the goose, "they've given you no giblets with him; you have been cheated." The smiling countenance of the green one was turned to dismay; he reflected for a moment, then turned back, and actually walked a distance of two miles, to ask the market-woman for the giblets of the live goose.

A QUEER EXPRESSION.—Joe Grimaldi was one of the most remarkable grimaces, not excepting the celebrated Clarks of Charles' time, who deceived his own surgeon as to his identity. Grimaldi has been known to keep the house in a roar by the varieties of expression of his face during a pretended admiration of the moon. He was once kissed at Sadler's Wells, after singing his celebrated comic song of "Tippy-wichet," and he appealed to the audience. "He had nodded," he said, "frowned, sneezed, choked, gaped, cried, grinned, grimaced, and hiccupped; he had

done all that could be done by brow, chin, cheeks, eyes, nose, and mouth, and what more did they want?"—"Why, we want," yawned a languid voice from the pit, "we want a new feature."

WHAT IS IT?

"Mary," said a wise and witty old lady, the other day to her grand-daughter, "what do you call that ugly bunch that hangs down behind your head?"

"Why, grandmother, everybody knows it is a waterfall."

"A waterfall, indeed!" rejoined the old lady, "it looks for all the world like a *land slide*."

EARLY.—Lord Palmerston used to tell this anecdote of himself. "When I was a young man the Duke of Wellington made an appointment with me at half-past seven in the morning, and some one asked me, 'Why Palmerston, how will you keep that engagement?' 'Oh,' I said, 'of course the easiest thing in the world. I shall keep it the last thing before I go to bed.'

CHANGING HATS.—Barry the painter was with Nollekens at Rome in 1760, and they were extremely intimate. Barry took the liberty one time, when they were about to leave the English coffee-house, to exchange hats with him. Barry's was edged with lace, and Nollekens's was a very shabby plain one. Upon his returning the hat the next morning, he was asked by Nollekens why he left him his gold-laced hat. "Why, to tell you the truth, my dear Joey," answered Barry, "I fully expected assassination last night; and I was to have been known by my laced hat." Nollekens used to relate the story, adding, "It's what the Old Bailey people would call a *true bill 'gainst Jim.*"

VERY LIKE EACH OTHER.—It appears that there were two persons of the name of Dr. John Thomas, not easily to be distinguished; for somebody (says Bishop Newton) was speaking of Dr. Thomas, when it was asked, "Which Dr. Thomas do you mean?" "Dr. John Thomas." "They are both named John." "Dr. Thomas who has a living in the city." "They have both livings in the city." "Dr. Thomas who is chaplain to the king." "They are both chaplains to the king." "Dr. Thomas who is a very good preacher." "They are both good preachers." "Dr. Thomas who squints." "They both squint." They were afterwards both bishops.

JOHN SMITH, JR.—Among the late votaries at the altar of Hymen in this city, says the *Portsmouth Chronicle*, was a young man, by occupation a carpenter, rejoicing in the same name as his father, and therefore compelled to use the affix Jr., to prevent confusion from similarity of names. It being one of the three occasions which come to nearly all in this world for their names to appear in print, his marriage was duly chronicled. His little brother perused the paper and read the marriage over and over, but the Jr. was an insurmountable obstacle to his understanding. After long study, light dawned upon him. "I know now," said he, "John Smith, Jr.—that's John Smith, *Jr.*"

PEOPLE talk about making a clean sweep. Can they make a sweep clean?—*Punch.*

A PARDONABLE MISTAKE.

Dr. Smiler: "By the by, I must congratulate you, Lady Jane. Of course you have heard that your nephew, George, has just got his first—"

Lady Jane: "His first! Gracious heavens! I didn't even know the boy was married!"

Dr. Smiler: "He! he! he! Your ladyship misundertsands me. I allude to his recent success at College."—*Punch.*

APPROPRIATE ORNAMENT.—The other day we observed a dress trimmed with artificial bunches of hops in a draper's window. Of course, the hops were intended for the ball.—*Punch.*

MAY MULLETS TO NOTE.—Different nations have different modes of expression. For instance, in China a Mandarin would never think of saying he did not care a button about it.—*Punch.*

A VISIT OF DUTY.

Miss —; Grandpapa, how are your eyes, to day?"

Grandpa: Well, my dear, I can't see anything yet, with them, but the doctor says I am much better; so I suppose I am if he says so!"

WHAT A BORE!—It is said that there is to be another tunnel under the Thames, and that will be at Deptford. It may well be a Debt-ford, for the first one never paid its way.—*Punch.*

GOOD NEWS FOR EXETER HALL.—It will, no doubt, greatly delight the negrophilists to learn that Earl Russell has once again admitted the great principle that a black man is as good as a white man, and a great deal better. In deference to the obvious wish of the Exeter Hall party that coloured people should be allowed to do as they like with white folks,

the Prime Minister has decided that no further steps need be taken to rescue the Abyssinian prisoners. His lordship is evidently anxious to blacken himself as much as possible out of regard for the negrophilists.—*Punch.*

GOOD NEWS FOR EXETER HALL.—It is reported that the Chancellor of the Exchequer intends to remove all duties from whisky.—*Punch.*

FASHIONABLE NEWS.—The Earl of Cork is to be Master of the Buckhounds, and arrangements have been accordingly made to teach those sagacious animals to draw coverts with cork-screws.—*Punch.*

GIN A BODY.—General Grant, in his report on the last year of the American campaign, says that General Butler was of no more use to him than if he had been "in a bottle strongly corked." Well, any butler knows that wine that is corked is not of much value at any time, but how utterly useless would this corked bottle have been with such a very bad body!—*Punch.*

A CLEAN SWEEP.—"In anticipation of the opening of Parliament," says a contemporary, "the House of Lords is undergoing a thorough cleansing." Why don't we wait till the Lords assemble, when a little cleansing might be effected to some purpose; indeed, a clean sweep of the whole affair, according to Mr. Bright, might prove advantageous.—*Punch.*

THE HEAD AND THE HEART.

The Head is stately, calm, and wise,
And bears a princely part;
And down below, in secret, lies
The warm, impulsive heart.

The lordly Head that sits above,
The Heart that beats below,
Their several office plainly prove,
Their true relation show.

The Heart erect, serene, and cool,
Endowed with Reason's art,
Was set aloft to guide and rule
The throbbing, wayward Heart.

And from the Head, as from the higher,
Comes all-directing thought;
And in the Heart's transforming fire,
All noble deeds are wrought.

Yet each is best when both unite
To make the man complete—
What were the heat without the light?
The light without the heat?

J. G. S.

GEMS.

THE world is seldom unthankful, if we know how, in the proper way, to do it service.

EVERWHERE endeavour to be useful, and everywhere you are at home.

ELOQUENCE.—True eloquence consists in saying all that is necessary, and nothing but what is necessary.

WHATEVER you dislike in another person, take care to correct in yourself by the gentle reproof of a bitter practice.

TIME has delicate little ways, but the sharpest cornered pebble, after all becomes smooth and blunt therein at last.

PLEASURE is to woman what the sun is to flowers; if moderately enjoyed, it beautifies, it refreshes, and it improves; if immoderately it withers, it deteriorates, and it destroys.

A CLEAR stream reflects all objects that are upon its shore, but is unsullied by them. So it should be with our hearts—they should show the effect of all objects, and yet remain unharmed by any.

THERE are two lives to each of us, gliding on at the same time, scarcely connected with each other—the life of our actions—the life of our minds; the external and the inward history; the movements of the frame—the deep and ever restless workings of the heart! They who have loved know that there is a diary of the affections, which we might keep for years without having occasion even to touch upon the exterior surface of life, our busy occupations, the mechanical progress of our existence, yet by the last we are judged—the first is never known.

THE NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK OF ENGLAND.—which was established in 1854, has now opened its new banking house, occupying the site of the Flower-Pot Inn, at the corner of Threadneedle Street and Bishopsgate Street. A branch has also been opened in Waterloo Place, Pall Mall. The number of shareholders in this establishment is about 1,700. It has a subscribed capital of £2,100,000, a paid-up capital of £1,080,000, and a reserve fund of £225,452 6s. 2d. The last division of profits was at

the rate of 28 per cent per annum. This bank has 124 branches in England and Wales, but before it could open a London office it has been obliged to defer to the laws enacted with a view to preserve to the Bank of England a monopoly of the note issues for sixty-five miles round London, and surrender its issue of notes. The amount of this issue, as fixed by law, is £442,371, and its cessation will necessitate a supplemental issue of notes by the Bank of England to the extent of two-thirds of this amount.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

ITEMS WORTH COMMITTING TO MEMORY.—A bit of glue dissolved in skim milk and water will restore old grape. Half a cranberry bound on a corn will soon kill it. An inkstand was turned over upon a white tablecloth, a servant threw over it a mixture of salt and pepper plentifully, and all traces of it disappeared. Picture frames and glasses are preserved from flies by painting them with a brush dipped into a mixture made by boiling three or four onions in a pint of water.

THE SILENT COAL SCUTTLE.—Mr. John Murray, of Whitehall Place, suggests, for the annoyance of invalids by the act of putting coals on the fire, a very simple remedy. It consists in wrapping the coals in paper bags, and placing them quietly on the fire with the hand, when the bags quickly ignite, and leave the coals to be distributed noiselessly over the fire. Bags of the required size, holding from three to five pounds of coal, may be purchased for a mere trifle. The inventor says he has for many years tried this plan with complete success, in the houses of himself and friends.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A HORSE-SHOW on a grand scale is to take place in Paris in April.

MILDNESS OF THE WEATHER IN ENGLAND.—Curant trees and peas are in full bud at Tunbridge Wells.

THERE were no fewer than one hundred and two prosecutions of the press in Berlin during the past year.

INSECTS have lately been found in ice caves having no communication with the outer air. They are apparently a kind of caddis fly.

THE wire and principal materials for the new Atlantic cable are being manufactured in Birmingham.

DR. LIVINGSTONE has been presented with 6,450 roubles (£635) by the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in aid of his projected explorations of Africa.

MR. NEWSOME has been exhibiting a new method of horse-breaking before the Prince of Wales, which is said to be a great improvement on Karey's system.

THE Emperor is delighted with the gift of the Emperor of Morocco of six Arab horses. He has since ridden them in the Champs Elysées—one at a time, of course—not the Courier of St. Petersburg style, *a la Ducrow*.

MINIATURE RAILWAY.—A railway line four furlongs—half a mile—long will be sought for in the ensuing session of Parliament. It is the line connecting the Cork and Youghal with the Great Southern and Western Railway at Cork.

ACCORDING to Professor Franklin's analysis, the water supplied by the Thames Companies, the New River, and the East London Companies, shows a marked increase in the total amount of solid impurity.

HUNTING HOUNDS.—There are 118 packs of hounds which hunt the English counties every week; they comprise four packs of stag-hounds, and consist of her Majesty's, Baron Rothschild's, Sir C. Copstable's, and the Surrey. There are ninety-five packs of harriers.

THERE are at the present moment forty-three reigning sovereigns in Europe. Of that number ten belong to the Roman Catholic religion, but one is excommunicated; thirty are Protestants, one is of the Greek Orthodox Church, and one a Mahomedan; the forty-third is the Pope.

CONSIDERABLE alarm has been excited at West Tilbury, by the proposal to plant a powder magazine opposite to it, about three hundred yards from the shore. After some opposition from the inhabitants, the magistrates' license was granted on the condition that the magazine should always be moored so as to float at low water. The greatest quantity to be stored at one time is stated to be fifty tons.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Y. X. B. Z.—A mastiff puppy may be obtained by any respectable dog-fancier. The fraternity is too numerous for us to point to any one in particular. Take some person with you who understands the animal, in which case you may not be cheated.

HELENA P., a Jewess, wishes to correspond matrimonially with a respectable tradesman of her own faith. Is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft. 3 in. in height, of fair complexion, has dark-eyes and hair, is considered pretty, very fond of home, and would make a most domesticated wife.

CLARA ROSA would like to meet with a young man with a view to matrimony. She is nineteen years of age, with brown hair and hazel eyes, is considered good looking, and is 5 ft. 3 in. in height; has no money, but is domesticated, and would make a steady young tradesman an industrious wife.

R. C. B., who is twenty-eight years of age, black hair and whiskers, 5 ft. 4 in. in height, the son of a tradesman, respectively connected, who contemplates shortly going into business for himself, would be happy to correspond with any eligible lady about his own age, with a view to matrimony.

FRANK would like to correspond matrimonially and exchange *cartes* with a young lady from eighteen to twenty years of age, fair, and of a cheerful disposition, if musical preferred. Is twenty-four years of age, dark complexion, with brown hair and eyes, considered good looking, and has a moderate income.

FLORA AND ALICE would like to correspond matrimonially with two gentlemen in respectable positions, and more than twenty-five years of age. "Flora" is twenty, of medium height, dark wavy hair, and laughing black eyes. "Alice" is nineteen, tall, ladylike, with fair hair and blue eyes. Both are very amiable and fond of home.

LOLAINE.—The success of a young man in any of our colonies depends chiefly upon his health, energy, and abilities. A tradesman, artizan, labourer, or farmer's chance of success would be infinitely superior to that of a clerk or professional man. Blood and sinew are wanted in the colonies.

O. O. O., who has just turned twenty-three, is 5 ft. 10 in. in height, rather dark, with black curly hair, slight moustache, and can boast of a good and lively disposition, would be pleased to correspond with a young lady not over twenty-three, nor very fair (a farmer's daughter preferred). *Cartes* to be exchanged. "O. O. O." holds a Government appointment.

BOTHED JANE.—In the event of a man dying intestate, leaving three daughters, the eldest daughter cannot claim the whole of his property; it is equally divided. A will properly witnessed is a legal document, although not made by a lawyer. Most legal instruments require a Government stamp; but in this particular instance you had better consult a solicitor.

JIA is anxious to correspond with a middle-aged man, with a view to matrimony. She is twenty-five years of age, with brown hair and hazel eyes, and is 5 ft. 6 in. in height; has no money, but is domesticated. She is no lover of pleasure. Her greatest happiness is in her home, and would make a steady and affectionate man a true and loving wife.

AS UNMARRIED ONE should get a wife with all speed, in which event he would scarcely desire to be informed whether washed or unwashed blankets were the most wholesome. Has "The Unmarried One" never heard that cleanliness is next to Godliness? If our correspondent objects to sleep in new blankets upon principle, surely know the remedy—get them washed before using them.

C. CHANDLER AND H. OUTRAM wish to correspond with two young ladies, who must be tall and beautiful, possessing large fortunes. "H. Outram" is 5 ft. 4 in. in height, very good looking, an excellent temper and good position. "C. Chandler" is rather short and stout, also very good looking, possessing a very good temper and position. Both willing to exchange *cartes*.

PANSY encloses a lock of her hair, and desires our opinion. *Ex pecta Herculeum*. Indeed, it would have been easier to judge of Hercules by his foot, or a house from a single brick, than lady's hair by a glance at a lock. All we can say is that, with some complexions and features, it might look pretty and becoming. The handwriting is clear and ladylike. "Pansy" has been correctly informed. On Candlemas Day (Feb. 2nd), it has from old, been the custom to remove the Christmas holly, mistletoe, and ivy used for decorative purposes. The history or legend of Candlemas is interesting. The festival of the Purification of the Virgin called "Candlemas" is of very early origin, and is still held as a holiday in the Christian church. It is considered by some to bear relation to the Februation or purification of the people in Pagan Rome, which was celebrated at the same time of the year. The term Candlemas is derived from the Roman Catholic custom of blessing a number of candles on thi-

day, and distributing them among the people, who afterwards carried them lighted in procession. Although at the Reformation the chief observances were given up in England, the custom of lighting churches with candles on this day was continued in some places, to the close of the eighteenth century. This festival has been designed to commemorate the churcning or purification of Mary, and the candle-bearing arose from what Simeon said when he took the infant Saviour in his arms, and declared he was a *light to lighten the Gentiles*. Hence appears to have arisen the custom of women carrying candles when they went to be, as it was called, churched after childbirth.

J. B. O., who declares himself exposed to all the temptations which beset a young gentleman on his entering into life, desires the attention of an amiable being of the opposite sex, who would render this life a perfect Paradise. He is twenty years of age, by no means bad looking, light-brown hair, bright blue eyes, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, and of a mild, placid temper, which nothing can ruffle.

LUCY and NELLIE, two cousins, wish to lay their case before our young gentlemen readers. "Lucy" is twenty, fair, rather tall, and good looking. "Nelly" is eighteen, tall, has dark hair and eyes, and considered pretty. They are well versed in domestic duties, and possess nothing but loving hearts to offer. They would prefer dark gentlemen. *Cartes* to be exchanged.

MARIA is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft. 2 in. in height, with brown hair, laughing blue eyes, of a loving and affectionate disposition, rather good looking, and thoroughly domesticated, would be happy to meet with a gentleman, with a view to matrimony; a farmer preferred. He need not be handsome, but tolerably good looking, rather tall, and very affectionate.

E. M., who is thoroughly domesticated, very well educated, of a cheerful disposition, is nineteen years of age, and 5 ft. in height, has long curly hair of a chestnut hue, blue eyes, and a fair complexion, would like to correspond matrimonially with a tall, dark young gentleman of about four-and-twenty years of age. She is remarkably fond of music. *Cartes* exchanged.

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.
To-day is dark with grief and care,
To-morrow's skies are bright and fair;
To-day is filled with doubtful light,
To-morrow's sun shines always bright;
To-day with clouds and storms we cope,
To-morrow weaves the buds of hope;
To-day we walk the thorny ground,
To-morrow roses bloom around;
To-day we shed the bitter tear,
To-morrow notes of joy we hear;
To-day we wait, and work, and sigh,
To-morrow rainbows gild the sky;
To-day we sit in cheerless gloom,
To-morrow flowers of beauty bloom.
Thus 'tis in life we slight to-day,
And leave its pearls of gladness lay,
Alas! too oft we find them gone,
As each to-morrow passes on.

P. H.

LEEDS is twenty-three years of age, fair complexioned with flaxen hair, blue eyes, and light whiskers, rather below the average height, and generally considered handsome. He is of a generous, lively, and cheerful disposition, fond of music, intellectually and religiously inclined, and a lover of home. Further, "Leeds" is well connected, and descended from a good family; but claims no merit on that score, for he thinks.

"Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And noble deeds than Norman blood."
Offering the foregoing qualifications, "Leeds" would like to correspond with a dark lady of some means, who is well educated, plausibly inclined, and of similar disposition. Beauty he does not sue for (for he knows that noble hearts beat often under a rough exterior), nor does he mind if the lady is an orphan.

LONTINA plaintively writes to us as follows: "Having arrived at the mature age of thirty-eight, I find myself left without a friend, having all my lifetime declined any offer of marriage for the sake of a relative of reserved habits, with whom I have resided. If any of your gentlemen readers are in want of a partner of steady but cheerful habits, passable in appearance, &c., please recommend 'Lontina'."

JUSTIN, being born in London, of an English mother and a Scotch father, wishes to know whether he is an Englishman or Scotchman. The latter, without doubt. Had "Justin" been born in a stable, would he have deemed himself a horse? Children inherit their nationality from their father. At all events, let Justin content himself that he is a Briton; let us hope a true one. The handwriting is bold, and the letters well formed; more practice will bring with it greater ease.

T. L. C. wishes to correspond with a young lady, with a view to matrimony. He is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, has dark hair, blue eyes, of fair complexion, considered very good looking, and possessed of a good income. The lady must be 5 ft. 4 in. in height, eighteen to twenty years of age, and must be of fair complexion, pretty, amiable, cheerful, loving, of good disposition, and possess a moderate income.

ETHEL BASSETT.—The situation of a nursery governess is not desirable for a young woman who has learned a trade. The duties are rather more of a domestic than of an educational character. Assuredly she would be expected to take the children out for a walk. Salary is very small. The length of time it would take to learn the nursery business in a first-class house would depend much upon the ability and industry of the apprentice. Having learned her trade, she would probably get 10*l*. for the first year. To the last query, advertized in the *Times*.

MARIAN and ALICE are desirous of commencing correspondence with two young tradesmen, who must be tall and dark. "Mariam" is of medium height, fair complexion, brown hair and hazel eyes, thoroughly domesticated, and rather inclined to endpoint; is respectably connected, and would make a loving wife. "Alice" is also of medium height, a blonde, and respectably connected. Both have received a liberal education, are fond of music, and would make kind and loving wives to young men of amiable and

social dispositions. *LOTTIE CLINTON*, a friend of "Mariam" and "Alice," also desires our efforts in her behalf. She is rather above the middle height, dark, of pale complexion, graceful, and considered amiable and good looking; belongs to the middle class of society, and would make an amiable and cheerful helpmate.

FLORENCE, GERTRUDE, and IDA will be happy to correspond matrimonially and exchange *cartes* with three gentlemen of good family and position. "Florence" is eighteen years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, blue eyes, fair complexion, brown hair, and graceful figure. "Gertrude" is 5 ft. 5 in. in height, eighteen years of age, and will leave her *carte* to complete her description. "Ida" is nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 2 in. in height, very dark complexion, dark hair and eyes. Any gentleman wishing to open a correspondence, will be expected to send their *cartes* as an earnest of good faith. The address in the hands of the editor, only to be revealed confidentially.

A. B. C.—The Cinque Ports are as follows: Dover, Sandwich, Hythe, Romney, Rye, Winchelsea, Hastings, and Seaford. They were originally five in number, as their name imports, and were in former times bound to the sovereign a certain number of ships of war in any emergency, in return for which their freemen were styled barons and ranked amongst the nobility. Each enjoyed other privileges and immunities. Their first charter was granted by William the Conqueror, in 1067. An officer was appointed over them, who was called the "Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and was also Constable of Dover Castle."

EMERSON D. G., who is sweet seventeen, with large brilliant black eyes, a clear skin, a good figure, and a little nose, which her friends call saucy, but which she considers a decided pug, having been cruelly jilted by a gentleman whom she believed entitled for her an ardent attachment, very properly and modestly returned his letters. The faithless swain, however, not having returned hers, asks our advice. *Que répondez-vous, mademoiselle?* Forget the shabby fellow at once, and rejoice at your lucky escape. Perhaps "Emerson" is a little coquettish. At all events, there can be little doubt that she is not wanting in the organ of self-esteem for deeming that the editorial eye can pierce through more than stone walls. She desires, without even sending us a carte, to know what we think of her looks. The handwriting is neat and ladylike.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

OCTOBER would like extremely to hear further from "C. S. W.", and exchange *cartes*, &c.

LONELY LIZZIE, who is twenty years of age, a brunette, of the medium height, would like to correspond matrimonially with "Fred A. G."

ROSE would be happy to correspond with "Charles B." with a view to matrimony. Is seventeen years of age, and very domesticated.

W. G. would be most happy to correspond and exchange *cartes* with "A. B. J. M." with a view to marriage. Is twenty years of age, tall, and of fair complexion.

R. Y., who is nineteen years of age, the son of an engineer and shipowner, and having, therefore, good prospects offers himself to the acceptance of "Maud," with whom he will be most happy to exchange *cartes*.

W. S. will be most happy to correspond with "A. B." with a view to matrimony. Is eighteen years of age, 5 ft. 7 in. in height, and dark; the son of a physician, and will have a good income when of age.

KATE DE VERE will be pleased to correspond with "P. C. H. T." Is twenty-three years of age, of medium height, with brown eyes and hair, very fond of music, an excellent housekeeper, and very respectfully connected.

LILY S. thinks she could accept "W. K." Is twenty years of age, 5 ft. 1 in. in height, with dark auburn hair and blue eyes, and fair complexion; is duly qualified in domestic duties, and of respectable family.

LILY H. is disposed to accept the matrimonial offer of "W. H." Is twenty years of age, good tempered, domesticated, and considered good looking. An exchange of *cartes* is desired.

MONTAGUE responds to Violet—with whom he is anxious to exchange *cartes*—stating that he is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, has dark brown hair, and eyes, of gentlemanly appearance and refined tastes.

F. B. would like to hear from and exchange *cartes* with "Helena." He is twenty-one years of age, tall, dark, and a steady young man, an upholsterer, of a very respectable family.

LOU, an educated young lady, would willingly exchange *carte* with "Charles Henry G." It could then judge for himself as to personal beauty—that being, however, with "Lou" a secondary consideration to beauty of the mind.

LILY would be most happy to correspond with "Michael Augustus K." and who would like to receive his *carte*, accompanied by some explanation as regards his profession and station in life.

WALTER N. responds to "Annie," whose *carte* is solicited. "Walter N." is considered tolerably good looking, highly educated, of the age specified, and has a moderate competence.

M. K. Z. offers himself to the acceptance of "Violet." Is twenty-two years of age, tall, with dark hair and whiskers, and considered rather good looking; is in good circumstances, having an income of more than 20*l*. per annum, and a comfortable home.

NELLY GORDON would be happy to correspond with "Dramaticus." Is just twenty-two years of age, tall, ladylike, and generally considered handsome, has received a plain English education, possesses a passionate taste for the stage, and is very respectfully connected.

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